



## Additional Quotes and Sources

The following quotes illustrate the conditions in Mexican Texas and why the Texians were compelled to declare independence from Mexico. Each quote relates to a grievance in the Declaration of Independence.

### Grievance:

“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 to which they had been habituated 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 acquiesced in the late changes made in the government by General Antonio Lopez de Santa Anna, who having overturned the constitution of his country, now offers us the cruel alternative, either to abandon our homes, acquired by so many privations, or submit to the most intolerable of all tyranny, the combined despotism of the sword and the priesthood.”

- *“The decree of the 3d October, therefore, if carried into effect, evidently leaves no remedy for Texas but resistance, secession from Mexico, and a direct to natural rights”* (Austin 1836).
- *“To this we reply, that our object is freedom-civil and religious freedom-emancipation from that government, and that people, who, after fifteen years experiment, since they have been separated from Spain, have shown that they are incapable of self-government, and that all hopes of any thing like stability or rational liberty in their political institutions, at least for many years, are vain and fallacious”* (Austin 1836).
- *“Our Brethren of Texas were invited by the Mexican Government, while Republican in it's form to come and settle, they did so, they have endured all the privations and sufferings incident to the settlement of a frontier country, and have surrounded themselves with all the comforts and conveniences of life. Now the Mexicans, with unblushing effrontery call on them to submit to a Monarchical Tyranical, Central despotism, at the bare mention of which every true hearted son of Ky. feels an instinctive horror, followed by a firm and steady glow of virtuous indignation”* (Cloud 1835).
- *“General Teran, the military commander in chief of the eastern department of the Mexican Republic, in the name of the United Mexican States, refused to allow their claims or to recognize the company, while he declared that the law of Congress of the 6th of April annulled all grants to empresarios which had not been fulfilled, and of course destroyed all those which the company professed to have consolidated”* (Anonymous 1834:97-98).
- *“Our proclamations to the other states of the Mexican Confederation, asking them to support us in our struggle for the restoration of our former rights, and for the protection of the Constitution of 1824, have, as you well know, been without results. Even many of the Mexicans who live between the Sabine and the Rio Grande have disdainfully forsaken the cause of freedom, and have not only denied us their support but united themselves with the*

*troops of Santa Anna and as enemies waged war against the land” (Sam Houston to the soldiers at Goliad) (Williams & Barker 1970:337-338).*

- *“Resolved That we view with feelings of the deepest regret the manner in which the Govt of the Republic of Mexico is administered by the present dynasty[sic]—The repeated violations of the constitution—the total disregard of the laws—the entire prostration of the civil authority; and the-substitution in its stead of a military despotism, are greivances[sic] of such character, as to arouse the feelings of every freeman, and impel him to resistance” (Turtle Bayou Resolutions).*

### **Grievance:**

“It has sacrificed our welfare to the state of Coahuila, by which our interests have been continually depressed through a jealous and partial course of legislation, carried on at a far distant seat of government, by a hostile majority, in an unknown tongue, and this too, notwithstanding we have petitioned in the humblest 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 just cause, contemptuously rejected.”

- *“...the province is so distant from the capital, and had been for some time so little attended to by the government, that the laws on this subject were ineffectual” (Anonymous 1834:210).*
- *“When the federal system and constitution were adopted in 1824, and the former provinces became states, Texas, by her representative in the constituent congress, exercised the right which was claimed and exercised by all the provinces, of retaining within her own control, the rights and powers which appertained to her as one of the unities or distinct societies, which confederated together to form the federal republic of Mexico. But not possessing at that time sufficient population to become a state by herself, she was with her own consent, united provisionally with Coahuila, a neighbouring province or society, to form the state of COAHUILA AND TEXAS, "until Texas possessed the necessary elements to form a separate state of herself." I quote the words of the constitutional or organic act passed by the constituent congress of Mexico, on the 7th of May, 1824, which establishes the state of Coahuila and Texas. This law, and the principles on which the Mexican federal compact was formed, gave to Texas a specific political existence, and vested in her inhabitants the special and well defined rights of self-government as a state of the Mexican confederation, so soon as she "possessed the necessary elements." Texas consented to the provisional union with Coahuila on the faith of this guarantee. It was therefore a solemn compact, which neither the state of Coahuila and Texas, nor the general government of Mexico, can change without the consent of the people of Texas” (Austin 1836).*
- *"In 1833 the people of Texas, after a full examination of their population and resources, and of the law and constitution, decided, in general convention elected for that purpose, that the period had arrived contemplated by said law and compact of 7th May, 1824, and that the country possessed the necessary elements to form a state separate from Coahuila. A respectful and humble petition was accordingly drawn up by this convention, addressed*

*to the general congress of Mexico, praying for the admission of Texas into the Mexican confederation as a state. I had the honor of being appointed by the convention the commissioner or agent of Texas to take this petition to the city of Mexico, and present it to the government. I discharged this duty to the best of my feeble abilities, and, as I believed, in a respectful manner. Many months passed and nothing was done with the petition, except to refer it to a committee of congress, where it slept and was likely to sleep. I finally urged the just and constitutional claims of Texas to become a state in the most pressing manner, as I believed it to be my duty to do; representing also the necessity and good policy of this measure, owing to the almost total want of local government of any kind, the absolute want of a judiciary, the evident impossibility of being governed any longer by Coahuila, (for three fourths of the legislature were from there,) and the consequent anarchy and discontent that existed in Texas. It was my misfortune to offend the high authorities of the nation-my frank and honest exposition of the truth was construed into threats" (Austin 1836).*

**Grievance:**

“It incarcerated in a dungeon, for a long time, one of our citizens, for no other cause but a zealous endeavor to procure the acceptance of our constitution, and the establishment of a state government.”

- “—on that day I was locked up in one of the dungeons of this vast building incommunicado, that is I was not allowed to speak to, or communicate with any person whatever except the officer of the guard” (Austin 1834).
- "After a skirmish they occupied the post, and then went to Anahuac, which capitulated. Colonel Bradburn, however reentered the town after they had retired, alleging that they had not adhered to the terms. Colonel Austin was afterwards arrested, on a charge of plotting to separate Texas from the Republic, and is still detained at Mexico” (Anonymous 1834:261-262).
- “He said there was much excitement among the people in San Felipe. Stephen F. Austin had been a prisoner in Mexico since December 10, 1833. Father said there would be trouble with Mexico, as she had ordered the arrest of several of the most prominent men in Texas. He didn't have much confidence in Spanish justice of Mexican laws” (Harris 1901:104).

**Grievance:**

“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.”

- “The province having been until recently left without any regular courts, and being still very imperfectly provided for in this way, the inhabitants have thought it necessary in many cases to take the administration of punishments for public crimes into their own hands. Their inflictions, if not always the most just or judicious, are very apt to prove efficacious. In Brazoria, about the time of my visit there, a man strongly suspected of robbing a store, (and probably guilty) was taken, whipped and cropped without judge or jury, and turned

*off to find his way out of the country as he could, but without any resort for satisfaction if he had been innocent” (Anonymous 1834:216).*

**Grievance:**

“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.”

- *“Everything in Harrisburg was different from what we had been accustomed to. No church, nor preacher, school house nor court house” (Harris 1901:88).*
- *“As there was no school in the neighborhood, mother made us study our lessons every day. At noon, we recited to Uncle James or father” (Harris 1901:99).*
- *“School commenced the first of June. There were only ten pupils, three girls, six boys and one young man, Harvey Stafford. The teacher boarded around among the neighbors...The school did well. There was no sickness. The grown men started to school. Three of them and the teacher camped in the schoolhouse and did their own cooking. Mother and Mrs. Dyer gave them milk, butter and eggs, and they went home Friday evening. Mr. Henson spent Saturdays and Sundays with the neighbors. The young men were anxious for the school to be kept open in the summer, as they had to work in the fall and winter” (Harris 1901:123-124).*
- *“There was a school kept in the house at that time by Mr. Phelps, who had been in Captain Partridge’s Academy in the Northern States. It was attended by the children of the family, by those from Mr. McNeil’s and another neighboring estate, who come daily, although the distance was considerable; and by two or three others from more remote habitations, who boarded in the house. Arrangements were making to increase the school, by receiving several other children into the family” (Anonymous 1834:253-254).*

**Grievance:**

“It has suffered the military commandants, stationed among us, to exercise arbitrary acts of oppression and tyranny, thus trampling upon the most sacred rights of the citizens, and rendering the military superior to the civil power.”

- *“Father came home. He had bad news. Mexico had sent more troops to Anahuac and a man-of-war to blockade the port at Galveston Island” (Harris 1901:107).*
- *“When the men returned they were very much discouraged. Mexico had sent a ship to blockade Galveston and to compel the people to ship their cotton from the port of Anahuac. The schooners could not come direct to Harrisburg, as Mexico had threatened to garrison that place. This order from Mexico worked a great hardship on the people, as it compelled them to haul their cotton to Brazoria, the principal commercial town in Texas” (Harris 1901:117).*

- *“Father and the men got home the last of the year 1834, well pleased with Brazoria, but found the people in great excitement. Mexico had landed soldiers at the mouth of the Brazos, and had established a garrison at Velasco. There had been a meeting of the people at Columbia. Their object was to call a convention to meet at San Felipe, the capital of Texas” (Harris 1901:119).*
- *“We were kept in a constant state of excitement and apprehension during the months of January and February [1836] by the reported movements and intentions of Santa Anna. We maintained regular communications with Goliad and San Antonio; and as the prevailing opinion was to the effect that Santa Anna could not possibly arrive sooner than the 1st of April, I took my departure for the town of Washington, where the convention was to be held; and on reaching the Lavaca River I met a courier from the town of Gonzales with the startling intelligence that Santa Anna had entered San Antonio. I, in company of others, returned home to look after our families. This episode precluded me from sharing the honor with others of signing ‘The Declaration of Independence’”(Linn 1883:124).*
- *“By their fixing and establishing among us, in time of peace, military posts, the object of which totally disregarding the local civil authorities of the state, and by committing various acts, which evinced, [oppositivity?] to the true interests of the people in the enjoyment of civil liberty” (Turtle Bayou Resolutions).*
- *“By the interposition of a military force, preventing the Alcalde of the Jurisdiction of Liberty from the exercise of his constitutional functions” (Turtle Bayou Resolutions).*
- *“By the military commandant of Anahuac, advising & procuring servants to exit the Service of their masters—offering them protection, causing them to labour for his individual benefit by force and refusing to compensate master or Servant” (Turtle Bayou Resolutions).*

**Grievance:**

“It has dissolved, by force of arms, the state Congress 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.”

- *“The fundamental compact having been dissolved, and all the guarantees of the civil and political rights of citizens having been destroyed, it is inevitable that all the states of the confederation are left at liberty to act for themselves, and require Coahuila and Texas to provide for their security and preservation as circumstances may require. Coahuila and Texas formed a state of the republic, and as one part of this is occupied by an invading force, the free part of it should proceed to organize a power which would restore harmony, and establish order and uniformity in all branches of the public administration, which would be a rallying point for the citizens, whose hearts now tremble for liberty! But as this power can be organized only by means of a convention, which would represent the free will of the citizens of Texas, it is my opinion that this step should be taken, and I suggest the 15th day of October as a time sufficient to allow all the departments to send their representatives” (Zavala 1835).*

**Grievance:**

“It has demanded the surrender of a number of our citizens, and ordered military detachments 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.”

- *“Recurring to the subject matter with which this chapter opened, I would add by way of incident that after Carbajal’s arrival home, immediately following the illegal disbandment of the legislature of Coahuila and Texas by order of Santa Anna, he was apprised by friends that it was the purpose of the supreme government to cause his arrest and transportation to the city of Mexico, where he was to be arraigned and tried for treason. A meeting of the citizens of Victoria was called to consider the matter, which threatened to deprive an eminent citizen of his liberty, and which, if successfully executed, would establish an evil precedent for all time” (Linn, 1883:36-37).*
- *“Major Bingham went to San Felipe, and on his return he stayed one night with father. He thought William B. Travis and others would keep up the agitation. He said there was an order from San Antonio to arrest several Texans and send them to Mexico for trial, but there was no one to make the arrest...When the news was received in Mexico that Anahuac had been forced to surrender by the Texans, an order was issued to Colonel Ugartechea to arrest seven Texans and send them to San Antonio to be tried by court martial. This was more than the people could bear. There was great excitement. A convention was called to meet at San Felipe the 12th of September. There was a meeting in our neighborhood to elect a delegate to this convention. The farmers had not much time to spare, but they would not see the Texans arrested” (Harris 1901:126-127).*
- *“By the imprisonment of our citizens without lawful cause, and claiming the right of trying said citizens, by a military court, for offenses of a character alone cognizable by the civil authority, and by refusing to—deliver them over to the said authority when demanded” (Turtle Bayou Resolutions).*

**Grievance:**

“It has made piratical attacks upon our commerce, by commissioning foreign desperadoes, and authorizing them to seize our vessels, and convey the property of our citizens to far distant ports for confiscation.”

- *“The people became very much discouraged on learning that Mexico had sent a revenue cutter to Galveston. It didn’t try to land, but anchored outside. There were several schooners at Harrisburg loaded with cotton and hides, that couldn’t get out. The captains said that the first big storm that came would blow the war ship away, and that then they would run out” (Harris 1901:133).*
- *“We learned that a Mexican Cutter has captured a Schooner supposed to have contraband goods off Velasco. The passengers, among them Mr. McKinny the owner, being put on shore. The schooner had Mexican colours. So much for disregarding all laws on the ground that there is not power to enforce them” (Holley 1965:23).*

**Grievance:**

“It denies us the right of worshipping the Almighty according to the dictates of our own conscience, 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.”

- *“What was calculated to add, if any thing could well add, to the mortification of such circumstances, to those who were Protestants, was the knowledge which they did not obtain until their arrival, that they could not settle in the country, without avowing themselves Roman Catholics. It has been said that the Mexican government will protect our citizens in life and property so long as they conform to the laws, as if this would avoid the necessity of changing their religious profession. But this has nothing to do with the case. The treaty, in the article sometimes quoted, alludes only to our citizens residing in Mexico, not to colonists, who must become Mexican citizens; and whose submission to the laws relating to colonization implies the profession of the Roman Catholic religion. Whatever laxity may occur in executing the laws at any period, they may be at any time put in force; and what I afterwards saw at San Felipe proves how the subject is viewed by persons on the ground. If known as Protestants, they might at any time be deprived of their estates by the execution of laws still unrepealed”* (Anonymous 1834:103-104).
- *“The principal objection to becoming a colonist in this country, arises out of the intolerance of the laws. Protestants are not allowed to have places for public worship, and the legitimacy of no marriage ceremony is acknowledge unless performed by a Roman Catholic priest. Under the government then existing, viz: that commonly called the usurpation of Bustamente, there were no hopes of any improvement in this respect, as the interests of the nation were opposed to those of the rulers, who chief supporters were the Europeans and the clerical and aristocratical natives. It is however generally believed by experienced and intelligent men in our own country, that the Roman Catholic system is by nature inimical to republicanism, and that both cannot have at once the ascendancy. Some of the most patriotic and experienced among the Mexican and South American statesmen are also known to have adopted the same opinion, after having seen a long and disastrous contest between these two systems. The clerical as well as the papal power has been impaired in Mexico; and if they are ever so far overcome as to permit the establishment of religious toleration, the principal objection against forming settlements in Texas will be removed. Until that time arrives, this objection will appear to many persons decisive”* (Anonymous 1834:222-223).
- *“One day during my stay at San Felipe, I witnessed a ceremony which would have been regarded as a very extraordinary thing in our own country. A Roman Catholic priest had arrived there, on a tour of visitation through the colony, and offered to perform baptismal and marriage ceremonies for all who might wish to receive them. Having been invited where he was to receive applications and administer, at a particular house in the village, I attended with two or three friends, to see what would be done. Several settlers from the United States, who I knew had no inclination in favor of Roman Catholicism, and though they had received a Protestant education, presented themselves for baptism. These, as I had reason to believe, acted merely on a wish to recommend themselves to the favor of the*

*government. Several afterwards came with their wives, and were married again, lest the legality of the Protestant ceremony should not be acknowledged, and stand as a bar between their descendants and their estates” (Anonymous 1834:223-224).*

- *“No church here but the Roman Catholic, and that very little respected” (Gray1965:85).*

**Grievance:**

“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.”

- *“The Federation has been dissolved, the Constitution declared at an end, and centralism has been established. Amidst all these trying vicissitudes, you remained loyal to the duty of citizens, with a hope that liberty would not perish in the republic of Mexico. But while you were fondly cherishing this hope, the Dictator required the surrender of the arms of the civic militia, that he might be enabled to establish on the ruins of the Constitution, a system of policy which would forever enslave the people of Mexico. Zacatecas, unwilling to yield her sovereign rights to the demand which struck at the root of all liberty, refused to disarm her citizens of their private arms. Ill-fated state! Her power as well as her wealth aroused the ambition of Santa Anna, and excited his cupidity. Her citizens became the first victims of his cruelty, while her wealth was sacrificed in payment for the butchery of her citizens” (Houston 1835).*
- *“I am requested to give some information relative to the situation and feelings of the people at Gonzalez and that vicinity {I returned} I left Gonzalez on Wednesday last and the people of that place were then assembled to decide upon what answer to give to a file of mexican soldiers who they expected in one or two days to demand a brass cannon which was in thier possession, When I left there were but three names in favour of giving up the cannon, so that the retaking of it seemed to be almost {a} unanimous with the people, several individuals there named that they wanted assentance from this colony as they expected in refusing the cannon that mexican troops would be sent immediatly upon them to enforce the order and perhaps commit depredations upon thir property. and if so nothing could save thier {effe}provisions & Stock but assistance from this colony. the Alcalde said to me that he had in possession about \$1000. Dolls, and was fearful that the military would also demand that. Several families were talking of moveing and some have actually prepared thier waggons to do so. they wish to move thier familes this side of the Colarado and to return themselves to the defence of this frontier. when I left a number more said they should move thier families as they expected {that the refusing the can} thier refusing to give up the cannon would bring foraging parties of soldiers upon them as they (the military at Bexar were short of provisions. E. Bailey Sept 26, 1835” (Bailey 1835).*

**Grievance:**

“It has invaded our country both by sea and by land, with intent to lay waste our territory, and drive us from our homes; and has now a large mercenary army advancing, to carry on against us a war of extermination.”

- *“The news that Santa Anna was marching on San Antonio was confirmed. The people at*

*Goliad and San Patricio were leaving their homes. And everybody was preparing to go to the United States. There was more or less dissension among the members of the Council of the Provisional Government. They deposed Governor Smith and installed Lieutenant Governor Robison. The Mexican army arrived at San Antonio, and the Council went to Washington on the Brazos. People were crossing the river at Fort Bend and Jones' ferry going east with their cattle and horses. Everybody was talking of running from the Mexicans” (Harris,1901:134).*

- *“An express was received at San Felipe last night which brings intelligence of the approach of the Mexican army; 1,000 men have passed the Rio Grande; as many more are on the opposite side, and they are passing over wagons, pack mules, etc. It is not known where Santa Anna is, but this is supposed to be the advance of the grand invading army. He has sworn to win Texas or lose Mexico” (Gray 1965:114).*
- *“They brought a hand bill issued by the Provisional Council, announcing the approach of Santa Anna with an army, and calling upon the Texans en masse to take the field” (Gray 1965:109).*

**Grievance:**

*“It has, through its emissaries, incited the merciless savage, with the tomahawk and scalping knife, to massacre the inhabitants of our defenseless frontiers.”*

- *“Great uneasiness was felt at this time relative to Indian depredations. There were fears of a general outbreak, predicated upon the amount of stealing going on through the country since the war began between the Americans and Mexicans. The Mexicans were evidently encouraging all the wild tribes to exterminate the colonists” (Morrell 1872:14).*

**Grievance:**

*“It hath been, during the whole time of our connection with it, the contemptible sport and victim of successive military revolutions, and hath continually exhibited every characteristic of a weak, corrupt, and tyrannical government.”*

- *“I was fortunately lodged on a good cot with a decent Tennessean named Kimball, who is looking for land, but says the state of anarchy is such that he is afraid to buy, and is waiting to see the course of things after the meeting of the Convention” (Gray 1965:107).*
- *“A new revolution occurred in Mexico in June 1834, the influence of which, if it should become general and lasting, would doubtless be unfavorable to the settlement of North Americans in the country. Gen. Santa Anna, after appearing to favor the very liberal plan of general reformation proposed by the Congress, prorogued it, and finally prevented its reassembling by stationing troops at the doors of their chambers. He has the priests and monarchists in his favor, and will probably involve the country in another protracted civil war” (Anonymous 1834:263).*
- *“These, I may be permitted to hope, you will attend in person, that all the essential functionaries of the government may deliberate, and adopt some course that will redeem*

*our country from a state of deplorable anarchy. Manly and bold decision alone can save us from ruin. I only require orders, and they shall be obeyed. If the government now yields to the unholy dictation of speculators and marauders upon human rights, it were better that we had yielded to the despotism of a single man, whose ambition might have been satisfied by our unconditional submission to his authority, and a pronouncement, for which we were asked, in favor of his power” (Houston to Henry Smith) (Williams & Barker 1970:332).*

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