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## Ideals Of The Declaration

It's the summer of 1776. The Revolutionary War has been raging on for about a year now. You are the infamous 23 year-old, and you (along with the other four members of the committee) were asked to write the first draft of the Declaration. After many hours of writing, and looking over the draft, it's done. Your prepared document was then revised by John Adams and Benjamin Franklin, then delivered to the committee, where it was approved and sent to the congress. The finished product was then shortened, but still included your powerful words which still greatly impacts many around the world. This lengthy document explained why the colonists have separated from, had statements of declaring independence, a list of grievances, and a statement of ideals. Ideals are defined as the principles or goals that reflects people's ideas of perfection. The four important ideals included in the declaration are Right to Life, Liberty and the Pursuit of Happiness, Equality, Consent of the Governed, and to Alter or Abolish Government. Each of these ideals have their own significance and unique way of contributing to the importance of the Declaration. The question is, which ideal is the most important, and in this case, the right to Alter or Abolish Government is the most important ideal.

The Right to Life, Liberty, and the Pursuit of Happiness is a familiar phrase in the declaration. These are known as the unalienable rights that belong to all people. Andrew Sullivan believes in a system of government that "places liberty at the center of its concerns." (Document B) Meaning that ideally, everyone would have the ability to live a good and fulfilling life. Thanks to this ideal, many people can live in freedom and happiness. Without life, there would be an insane amount of killings. Without liberty, there would be slavery and the government would be able to control everyone. Without the pursuit of happiness, no one would be able to live a truly fulfilling life. Basically, it would be very chaotic without this ideal. The government wouldn't have to listen to the people, and the system of the government would crumble because no one would have these unalienable rights.

Many people believe that equality is the key ideal to achieving a fulfilling life. Equality is one of the many important ideals, Document A states: "We hold these truths to be self-evident: that all men and women are created equal." To Diana Pham, —who used to live in refugee camps in Vietnam, equality means an equal opportunity to succeed, and the chance to become whatever we choose to become. Diana Pham risked everything to leave her home back in Vietnam, to escape the terrible life she lived, and has built a new and happy life with her family in the United States. (Document A) Equality is also associated with the unalienable rights to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. (Document A) So without equality people wouldn't be able to live a life of happiness and not everyone would be able to live freely. If there was no equality, only a small number of people would be able to succeed, and only the privileged people would be able to live a fulfilling life. This ideal provides people with a chance to succeed in life, no matter who they are. Furthermore, equality is crucial to living a life of happiness.

Consent of the governed is an important ideal that means that power is only justified when the people give their consent. This ideal gives people the ultimate authority. So the people are given the right to choose who gets the most power, and without the people's consent, the government would get no power. "The most fundamental concept of democracy is the idea that government exists to secure the rights of the people." (Document C) Meaning, the main

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purpose of the government is to uphold and protect the people's rights, and those rights are being controlled by the people. In 1989, students and protesters in China came together in Tiananmen Square, calling for a change in government. They wanted the power to be among the people, because their government was abusing their power. Instead of listening to the peaceful protesters, the Chinese government killed up to three thousand of their own people. (Document C) Without the consent of the governed, the people would have no power. No one would be able to truly achieve happiness, just like those people in China. They wouldn't have to listen to the people, and the government would abuse their power, doing whatever is easiest for themselves. That would mean no freedom for the people, and without freedom, there would be no happiness.

While Equality, the Right To Life, Liberty and the Pursuit of Happiness, and Consent of the Governed all play an important role in the Declaration, The right to Alter or Abolish is the most important ideal. If anything were to go wrong in the government, for example if the government became corrupt, the people would be able to restore, alter, or make a new government. The Tea Party Movement does basically that. The members associated with The Tea Party Movement believe in a smaller government and they have a goal to follow the words and intent of the declaration and constitution. (Document D) With this ideal, people are granted the right to organize, demonstrate, or vote through peaceful means as opposed to violence. Without the right to alter or abolish the government, things wouldn't be so easy to fix. If the government were to become a tyranny, the people wouldn't be able to escape that. They would have to live with the terrible and cruel government ruling. That could potentially lead to unnecessary rules to abide by. People wouldn't have the right to life, liberty, or happiness. It would be hard to obtain equal rights for everyone, and no one would have a voice.

All things considered, all four of the ideals in the Declaration of Independence are important, but the most significant and crucial ideal is the right to Alter or Abolish Government. Even though some may argue that Life, Liberty, and the Pursuit of Happiness is the most important ideal it is not. The right to Alter or Abolish is more important. While yes, the unalienable rights do give people freedom and happiness, it doesn't match the right to Alter or Abolish Government. If there was ever a time when the government abused their power, the people would step up and either fix the problem, or abolish it altogether. If that wasn't an option the people wouldn't be able to live a life of happiness and freedom, and they wouldn't be able to fix things. The Declaration of Independence and the ideals associated with it are the basis of our government. They lay the foundation and reflect the full vision of the United States. Besides that, the government's main purpose is to secure and protect the people's rights. Furthermore, these ideals play their own crucial parts in people's lives, they give people the opportunity to live their lives with order. Without the four ideals, who knows how bad things could be.