

It's not really my place. I'm an Ontario boy. Who am I to draft a declaration of independence for Alberta? The answer is, I'm Canadian, and my compromised, complacent country needs shaking up. And perhaps I am Albertan in spirit. If Alberta and other parts of the West resolved to separate from Canada, who could blame them? They could become an independent country or join the United States. I do not claim to represent Alberta's sentiments, but if I was from Alberta, this is what I would say.

~ Bruce Pardy

ALBERTA DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE

We the People of Alberta resolve to leave the Canadian federation of provinces. We will become an independent country or join the United States of America.

When one people propose to dissolve the political bands which have connected them with another, says the American Declaration of Independence, they should set forth the causes which compel them to the separation.

Alberta became a province 120 years ago. That was probably inevitable, since Canadian interests already controlled the territory. But for the people of Alberta, it has proven to be a mistake.

In 1775, long before there was an Alberta, George Washington wrote to the inhabitants of Canada. He invited them to reject the rule of the British king, and to join the Americans' quest to be free.

"Come then, my Brethren, unite with us in an indissoluble Union, let us run together to the same Goal. We have taken up Arms in Defence of our

Liberty, our Property, our Wives, and our Children, we are determined to preserve them, or die. We look forward with Pleasure to that Day not far remote (we hope) when the Inhabitants of America shall have one Sentiment, and the full Enjoyment of the Blessings of a free Government.”

The Canadians rebuffed him. They wanted to be subjects of the Crown. Liberty is America’s foundational idea. Canada’s is deference to authority.

Canadians are subjects still. Their monarch is now a figurehead, but the Crown is still sovereign. Under the Westminster system of government, one small group of people commands both the legislature and the executive branch of government. They appoint judges to the courts and senators to the upper house of Parliament. Yes, even in 2025, our senators are not elected but appointed. While in power, our prime minister may as well be king. Canada retains the core notion of feudalism. The Crown owns the territory, while people and their property rest beneath its benevolent hand.

Canada’s mantra is not “life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness” but “peace, order, and good government.” Its public authorities tell you what to do.

In 2025, another American president has re-opened the door. In spirit, Alberta walked through it long ago. We have liberty in our veins. We too hold these truths to be self-evident: that all individuals are created equal. That we have unalienable rights to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. That governments exist to secure these rights. That they derive their powers from the consent of the governed.

No doubt America has its problems. But over time, it has weathered storms from within and without. Its constitutional architecture has good bones. We respect its separation of powers and its checks and balances. We admire its robust Bill of Rights. We believe in the principle, long abandoned in Canada, of equal protection of the law.

We wish to live in a republic, in which the people rule.

Canada is not such a country. We have reluctantly concluded that it has no realistic prospect of becoming one. Instead, we find ourselves members of a beleaguered, corrupted, manipulated society. Vested interests and sacred cows make meaningful reform impossible. Canada is a country in retreat, more interested in redistributing wealth than in producing it, more resolved to administer than to build, and more prone to languish than to strive. Its people have traded freedom for the appearance of safety, and competition for the solidarity of victimhood. Its culture punishes risk and rewards conformity. Its elites collaborate with foreign powers and global institutions. They sacrifice the interests of the people to plunder the country of what remains of its prosperity. For a privileged class of “public servants”, Canada has become a gift.

In the Canadian federation, Alberta is the younger son who makes the money that keeps the family afloat. Yet his resentful older siblings still push him around at the dinner table. The Canadian government impedes Alberta’s key industries. It undermines Alberta’s constitutional jurisdiction. It taxes the wealth of Alberta’s people and sends it to other parts of the country.

A political and corporate aristocracy from Ontario and Quebec controls the Canadian state. They are Laurentians, a central Canadian establishment based in major cities in the St. Lawrence River watershed, including Montreal, Ottawa and Toronto. They rebuff our attempts to reform the Canadian federation. They refuse an elected senate with equal representation from each province. They decline to change the Canadian system of “equalization”. They permit no measures to dilute their influence or disturb the Laurentian consensus. Remnants of the Old World persist in the New.

We have been proud and loyal Canadians. Our country has not reciprocated. We are hardy people: industrious, self-sufficient, resourceful, and innovative. We seek no charity, but only the freedom to make our own way. Canadians from around the country who share our sentiments may wish to move to Alberta to join us in this journey. We

will welcome them. They, like us, do not belong in the fiefdom that Canada has become.

We reject Canadian deference to authority. We refuse to be subjects any longer. We do not consent. Whenever any form of government becomes destructive of liberty, says the American Declaration of Independence, it is the right of the people to alter or abolish it. Or to depart.

At long last, it is time to go.

Bruce Pardy, executive director of Rights Probe and professor of law at Queen's University.