



## WHITE PAPER

### What Thomas Jefferson said about Maintaining "the spirit of '76"

Thomas Jefferson emphasized several key ideas related to maintaining the "Spirit of '76":

#### 1. Preserving the Principles of the Declaration of Independence:

Jefferson saw the Declaration as outlining core principles like equality, inalienable rights, and government by consent of the governed that were essential to the Spirit of '76. These principles should continue to guide the nation.

#### 2. Vigilance against tyranny:

Jefferson advocated for ongoing resistance to tyranny and oppression. He famously wrote that "The tree of liberty must be refreshed from time to time with the blood of patriots and tyrants." Maintaining the revolutionary spirit requires active defense of liberty.

#### 3. Civic engagement and an informed citizenry:

Jefferson emphasized the importance of an educated, engaged populace to preserve democracy. He wrote "I know no safe depository of the ultimate powers of the society but the people themselves; and if we think them not enlightened enough to exercise their control with a wholesome discretion, the remedy is not to take it from them, but to inform their discretion by education." It should be noted that in Jefferson's time, people were educated to have Good Character.

#### 4. Limited Government:

Jefferson advocated for restricting government power to protect individual liberties. He saw this as key to preserving the Spirit of '76.

#### 5. Ongoing pursuit of the revolutionary ideals:

Jefferson saw the American experiment as a work in progress that required continual effort to fully realize its founding principles. He encouraged future generations to keep striving toward the ideals of the Revolution.

#### 6. Resistance to aristocracy and monied interests:

Later in life, Jefferson warned against the "vast accession of strength from their younger recruits, who having nothing in them of the feelings or principles of '76 now look to a single and splendid government of an Aristocracy, founded on banking institutions and monied in corporations." He saw this as a threat to the Spirit of '76.

## Maintaining the Spirit of '76

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In essence, Jefferson believed maintaining the Spirit of '76 required ongoing commitment to revolutionary principles, civic engagement, vigilance against tyranny, and resistance to forces that might undermine democracy and individual liberty. He saw it as an active, continuing process rather than a static achievement.

Citations: [from Perplexity.ai]

[1] [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Spirit\\_of\\_'76\\_\(sentiment\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Spirit_of_'76_(sentiment))

[2] [https://www.goodreads.com/author/quotes/1673.Thomas\\_Jefferson](https://www.goodreads.com/author/quotes/1673.Thomas_Jefferson)

[3] <https://www.goodreads.com/work/quotes/4991260-letters-of-thomas-jefferson>

[4] <https://banr.foundation/the-spirit-of-76/>

[5] <https://www.loc.gov/collections/thomas-jefferson-papers/articles-and-essays/selected-quotations-from-the-thomas-jefferson-papers/>

[6] <https://bookroo.com/quotes/thomas-jefferson>

[7] <https://missouriindependent.com/2022/04/14/the-loyal-opposition-is-a-key-element-of-democracy-and-were-losing-it-opinion/>

[8] <https://seattlemedium.com/vp-kamala-harris-closing-speech/>