I do not wish to think, or speak, or write, with moderation... I am in earnest -- I will not equivocate -- I will not excuse -- I will not retreat a single inch -- and I will be heard. William Lloyd Garrison (The Liberator, January 1, 1831)

Those words from the inaugural issue of the anti-slavery newspaper, The Liberator, marked the beginning of the journalistic crusade of William Lloyd Garrison, which would eventually transform into a successful Abolitionist campaign against slavery in the United States of America. Throughout his lifetime, Garrison served, with unflinching dedication, the cause of eradicating the institution of slavery from America. His uncompromising stance against slavery made him one of the foremost Abolitionists of his time. In 1832, Garrison founded the New England Anti-Slavery Society, the first immediatist [proposing the immediate and unconditional liberation of slaves and end of slavery] society in the country. In 1833, the main activist arm of the Abolitionist Movement, the American Anti-Slavery Society was formed under his leadership. He authored the Declaration of Sentiments which follows.

SOURCE: (http://community.middlebury.edu/~fahmed/garrison.htm)

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**Declaration of Abolitionist Sentiments (1833)**

The Convention assembled in the city of Philadelphia, to organize a National Anti-Slavery Society, promptly seize the opportunity to promulgate the following Declaration of Sentiments, as cherished by them in relation to the enslavement of one-sixth portion of the American people . . . .

Those for whose emancipation we are striving--constituting at the present time at least one-sixth part of our countrymen--are recognized by law, and treated by their fellow-beings, as marketable commodities, as goods and chattels, as brute beasts; are plundered daily of the fruits of their toil without redress; really enjoy no constitutional nor legal protection from licentious and murderous outrages upon their persons; and are ruthlessly torn asunder--the tender babe from the arms of its frantic mother--the heart-broken wife from her weeping husband--at the caprice or pleasure of irresponsible tyrants. For the crime of having a dark complexion, they suffer the pangs of hunger, the infliction of stripes, the ignominy of brutal servitude. They are kept in heathenish darkness by laws expressly enacted to make their instruction a criminal offence.

These are the prominent circumstances in the condition of more than two millions of our people, the proof of which may be found in thousands of indisputable facts and in the laws of the slaveholding States.

Hence we maintain--that, in view of the civil and religious privileges of this nation, the guilt of its oppression is unequalled by any other on the face of the earth; and, therefore, that it is bound to repent instantly, to undo the heavy burdens, and to let the oppressed go free.
We further maintain—that no man has a right to enslave or imbrute his brother—to hold or acknowledge him, for one moment, as a piece of merchandise keep back his hire by fraud—or to brutalize his mind, by denying him the means of intellectual, social and moral improvement.

The right to enjoy liberty is inalienable. To invade it is to usurp the prerogative of Jehovah. Every man has a right to his own body—to the products of his own labor—to the protection of law—and to the common advantages of society. It is piracy to buy or steal a native African, and subject him to servitude. Surely, the sin is as great to enslave an American as an African.

Therefore we believe and affirm—that there is no difference, in principle, between the African slave trade and American slavery: That every American citizen who retains a human being in involuntary bondage as his property, is, according to Scripture (Ex. xxi. 16), a man-stealer:

That the slaves ought instantly to be set free, and brought under the protection of law:
That if they had lived from the time of Pharaoh down to the present period, and had been entailed through successive generations, their right to be free could never been alienated, but their claims would have constantly risen in solemnity:

That all those laws which are now in force, admitting the right of slavery, are therefore, before God, utterly null and void; being an audacious usurpation of the Divine prerogative, a daring infringement on the law of nature, a base overthrow of the very foundations of the social compact, a complete extinction of all the relations, endearments and obligations of mankind, and a presumptuous transgression of all the holy commandments; and that therefore they ought instantly to be abrogated.

We further believe and affirm—that all persons of color who possess the qualifications which are demanded of others, ought to be admitted forthwith to the enjoyment of the same privileges, and the exercise of the same prerogatives, as others; and that the paths of preferment, of wealth, and of intelligence, should be opened as widely to them as to persons of a white complexion.

We maintain that no compensation should be given to the planters emancipating their slaves:
Because it would be a surrender of the great fundamental principle, that man cannot hold property in man;
Because slavery is a crime, and therefore is not an article to be sold;
Because the holders of slaves are not the just proprietors of what they claim; freeing the slave is not depriving them of property, but restoring it to its rightful owner; it is not wronging the master, but righting the slave-restoring him to himself;
Because immediate and general emancipation would only destroy nominal, not real, property; it
would not amputate a limb or break a bone of the slaves, but, by infusing motives into their
breasts, would make them doubly valuable to the masters as free laborers; and

Because, if compensation is to be given at all, it should be given to the outraged and guiltless
slaves, and not to those who have plundered and abused them.

We regard as delusive, cruel and dangerous any scheme of expatriation which pretends to aid,
either directly or indirectly, in the emancipation of the slaves, or to be a substitute for the
immediate and total abolition of slavery.

We fully and unanimously recognize the sovereignty of each State, to legislate
exclusively on the subject of the slavery which is tolerated within its limits; we concede that
Congress, under the present national compact, has no right to interfere with any of the slave
States in relation to this momentous subject:

But we maintain that Congress has a right, and is solemnly bound, to suppress the
domestic slave trade between the several States, and abolish slavery in those portions of our
territory which the Constitution has placed under its exclusive jurisdiction.

We also maintain that there are, at the present time, the highest obligations resting upon
the people of the free States to remove slavery by moral and political action, as prescribed in the
Constitution of the United States. They are now living under a pledge of their tremendous
physical force, to fasten the galling fetters of tyranny upon the limbs of millions in the Southern
States; they are liable to be called at any moment to suppress a general insurrection of the slaves;
they authorize the slaveowner to vote for three-fifths of his slaves as property, and thus enable
him to perpetuate his oppression; they support a standing army at the South for its protection;
and they seize the slave who has escaped into their territories, and sent him back to be tortured
by an enraged master or a brutal driver. This relation to slavery is criminal, and full of danger: IT
MUST BE BROKEN UP.

Done at Philadelphia, the 6th day of December, A. D. 1833.

Selections from the Writings and Speeches of William Lloyd Garrison. New York: Negro