

**HISTORICAL DOCUMENT 5****English Bill of Rights, 1689**

WHEN the Catholic king, James II, was forced from the English throne in 1688, Parliament offered the crown to his Protestant daughter Mary and her husband, William of Orange. But Parliament insisted that William and Mary submit to a Bill of Rights. This document, a continuation of the struggle between the crown and Parliament, sums up the powers that Parliament had been seeking since the Petition of Right in 1628. Also in 1689, Parliament passed the Act of Toleration, which guaranteed all Protestants freedom of worship. It did not, however, extend the same privileges to Catholics and followers of other religions.

WHEREAS, The late King James II . . . did endeavor to subvert and extirpate [eliminate] the Protestant religion and the laws and liberties of this kingdom . . . and whereas the said late King James II having abdicated the government, and the throne being vacant . . .

. . . the said lords [Parliament] . . . being now assembled in a full and free representative [body] of this nation, . . . do in the first place . . . declare:

1. That the pretended power of suspending of laws or the execution of laws by real authority without consent of Parliament is illegal; . . .
4. That levying money for or to the use of the crown by pretense of prerogative [right] without grant of Parliament . . . is illegal;
5. That it is the right of the subjects to petition the king, and all commitments and prosecutions for such petitioning are illegal.

6. That . . . raising or keeping a standing army within the kingdom in time of peace, unless it be with consent of Parliament, is against law. . .
8. That election of members of Parliament ought to be free. . . .
9. That the freedom of speech and debates or proceedings in Parliament ought not to be impeached [challenged as to the validity thereof] or questioned in any court or place out of Parliament. . . .
10. That excessive bail ought not to be required, nor excessive fines imposed, nor cruel and unusual punishments inflicted. . . .
13. And that, for redress of all grievances and for the amending, strengthening, and preserving of the laws, Parliaments ought to be held frequently. . . .

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. How, according to the Bill of Rights, did King James II offend the English Parliament?
2. What was the Parliament's military policy?
3. How does the English Bill of Rights protect the rights of individuals?