

# Grasping Reality with Both Hands

The weblog of Brad DeLong. Comments (mostly) welcome, or email me at [delong@hey.com](mailto:delong@hey.com) with "delong-weblog" as the subject.  
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## Kaplan: The "Domestic Insurrections" of the Declaration of Independence—Noted

**Sidney Kaplan** (1976): *The "Domestic Insurrections" of the Declaration of Independence* <https://www-jstor-org.libproxy.berkeley.edu/stable/pdf/2717252.pdf>: 'in his original draft of the Declaration... Jefferson.... "He is now exciting those very people to rise in arms among us, and to purchase that liberty of which he has deprived them...". David Brion Davis... correctly observes that Jefferson... "condemned King George for... inciting American Negroes to rise in arms against their masters."... He concludes: "Congress struck out the entire section.... [But] Jefferson's original draft of the Declaration... [lacked] the opening clause of the twenty-seventh charge in the final and approved document: "He has excited domestic insurrections amongst us".... Jefferson deplores the deletion by Congress of the clause "reprobating the enslaving the inhabitants of Africa"-but he says nothing, and never would, about the deletion of the clause... which reprobates George III for fomenting revolt. And why should he, if, in fact, the addition of "exciting domestic insurrections amongst us" to the twenty-seventh charge-which he voted for with the rest of the signers-amounted to substantially the same thing?... There is an entry in John Adams' diary for September 24, 1775.... "In the evening... two gentlemen from Georgia, came into our room... These gentlemen gave a melancholy account of the State of Georgia and South Carolina. They say that if one thousand regular troops should land in Georgia, and their commander be provided with arms and clothes enough, and proclaim freedom to all the negroes who would join his camp, twenty thousand negroes would join it from the two Provinces in a fortnight. The negroes have a wonderful art of communicating intelligence among themselves; it will run several hundreds of miles in a week or fortnight...". It is now time to repeat the opening question: What did Congress mean by "domestic insurrections"? The answer: slave revolt... .#noted #tags #2020-07-28 <https://github.com/braddelong/public-files/blob/master/readings/article-kaplan-domestic-insurrections.pdf>

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