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maneuvers of the one will serve to unmask the other. In democracies, the vices of the magistrate are in general wholly personal to him.

But public men under the government of aristocracy have a class interest which, if it is sometimes intermingled with that of the majority, often remains distinct from it. That interest forms a common and lasting bond among them; it invites them to unite and to combine their efforts toward a goal that is not always the happiness of the greatest number: it not only binds those who govern with one another; it also unites them to a considerable portion of the governed; for many citizens, without being vested with any post, make up a part of the aristocracy.

The aristocratic magistrate therefore encounters constant support in society at the same time that he finds it in the government.

The common object that unites the magistrates in aristocracies to the interest of a part of their contemporaries also identifies them and subjects them, so to speak, to that of future races. They work for the future as well as for the present. The aristocratic magistrate is therefore pushed toward the same point all at once by the passions of the governed, by his own, and I could almost say by the passions of his posterity.

How be surprised if he does not resist? One often also sees the spirit of class in aristocracies carry along even those it does not corrupt and, little by little without their knowing it, make them accommodate the society to their use and prepare it for their descendants.

I do not know if an aristocracy as liberal as that of England has ever existed, which without interruption has furnished men as worthy and enlightened to the government of the country.

It is, however, easy to recognize that in English legislation the good of the poor has in the end often been sacrificed to that of the rich, and the rights of the greatest number to the privileges of some: thus England in our day unites within itself all the most extreme fortunes, and one meets with miseries there that almost equal its power and glory.

In the United States, where public officials have no class interest to make prevail, the general and continuous course of government is beneficent although those who govern are often unskillful and sometimes contemptible.

There is, therefore, at the base of democratic institutions, a hidden tendency that often makes men cooperate for the general prosperity despite their vices or errors, whereas in aristocratic institutions a secret inclination is sometimes discovered that, despite talents and virtues, brings them to contribute to the miseries of those like them. Thus it can happen that in aristocratic governments public men do evil without wanting to, and in democracies they produce good without having any thought of doing so.

ON PUBLIC SPIRIT IN THE UNITED STATES

Instinctive love of native country.—Reflective patriotism.—Their different characteristics.—That people ought to strive with all their strength toward the second when the first disappears.—Efforts the Americans have made to achieve this.—The interest of the individual intimately bound to that of the country.

There exists a love of native country that has its source principally in the unreflective, disinterested, and indefinable sentiment that binds the heart of the man to the place where the man was born. This instinctive love intermingles with the taste for old customs, with respect for ancestors and memory of the past; those who feel it cherish their country as one loves a paternal home. They love the tranquillity they enjoy; they hold to the peaceful habits they have contracted there; they are attached to the memories it presents to them, and even find some sweetness in living there obediently. Often that love of native country is further exalted by religious zeal, and then one sees prodigies done. It is a sort of religion itself; it does not reason, it believes, it feels, it acts. Peoples have been encountered who have, in some fashion, personified the native country and have caught a glimpse of it in the prince. They have therefore carried over to him a part of the sentiment of which patriotism is composed; they have become haughty with his triumphs and have taken pride in his power. There was a time, under the former monarchy, when the French experienced a sort of joy in feeling themselves delivered without recourse to the arbitrariness of the monarch, and they used to say haughtily: "We live under the most powerful king in the world."

Like all unreflective passions, this love of country pushes one to great, fleeting efforts rather than to continuity of efforts. After having saved the state in a time of crisis, it often allows it to decline in the midst of peace.

When peoples are still simple in their mores and firm in their beliefs; when society rests gently on an old order of things whose legitimacy is not contested, one sees this instinctive love of native country reign.

There is another more rational than that one; less generous, less ardent perhaps, but more fruitful and more lasting; this one is born of enlightenment; it develops with the aid of laws, it grows with the exercise of rights, and in the end it intermingles in a way with personal interest. A man understands the influence that the well-being of the country has on his own; he knows that the law permits him to contribute to producing this well-being, and he interests himself in the prosperity of his country at first as a thing that is useful to him, and afterwards as his own work.

But sometimes a moment arrives in the lives of peoples when old customs are changed, mores destroyed, beliefs shaken, the prestige of memories faded

away, and when, however, enlightenment remains incomplete and political rights are badly secured or restricted. Then men no longer perceive the native country except in a weak and doubtful light; they no longer place it in the soil, which has become a lifeless land in their eyes, nor in the usages of their ancestors, which they have been taught to regard as a yoke; nor in the religion which they doubt; nor in the laws they do not make, nor in the legislator whom they fear and scorn. They therefore see it nowhere, no more with its own features than with any other, and they withdraw into a narrow and unenlightened selfishness. These men escape prejudices without recognizing the empire of reason; they have neither the instinctive patriotism of the monarchy nor the reflective patriotism of the republic; but they have come to a stop between the two, in the midst of confusion and miseries.

What is one to do in such a state? Retreat. But peoples no more come back to the sentiments of their youth than do men to the innocent tastes of their first years; they can regret them, but not make them revive. One must therefore go further ahead and hasten to unite in the eyes of the people individual interest to the interest of the country, for disinterested love of one's native country is fleeing away without return.

I am surely far from claiming that, to arrive at this result, one ought to accord the exercise of political rights to all men all at once; but I say that the most powerful means, and perhaps the only one that remains to us, of interesting men in the fate of their native country is to make them participate in its government. In our day, the spirit of the city seems to me inseparable from the exercise of political rights; and I think that from now on one will see the number of citizens in Europe increase or diminish in proportion to the extension of these rights.

How is it that in the United States, where the inhabitants arrived yesterday on the soil they occupy, where they have brought neither usages nor memories; where they meet for the first time without knowing each other; where, to say it in a word, the instinct of the native country can scarcely exist; how is it that each is interested in the affairs of his township, of his district, and of the state as a whole as in his own? It is that each, in his sphere, takes an active part in the government of society.

In the United States, the man of the people understands the influence that general prosperity exerts on his happiness—an idea so simple and yet so little known by the people. Furthermore, he is accustomed to regarding this prosperity as his own work. He therefore sees in the public fortune his own, and he works for the good of the state not only out of duty or out of pride, but I would almost dare say out of cupidity.

One does not need to study the institutions and history of America to know the truth of what precedes; mores advertise it enough to you.

American, taking part in all that is done in this country, believes himself interested in defending all that is criticized there; for not only is his country then attacked, he himself is: thus one sees his national pride have recourse to all the artifices and descend to all the puerilities of individual vanity.

There is nothing more annoying in the habits of life than this irritable patriotism of the Americans. A foreigner would indeed consent to praise much in their country; but he would want to be permitted to blame something, and this he is absolutely refused.

America is therefore a country of freedom where, in order not to wound anyone, the foreigner must not speak freely either of particular persons, or of the state, or of the governed, or of those who govern, or of public undertakings, or of private undertakings; or, finally, of anything one encounters except perhaps the climate and the soil; and still, one finds Americans ready to defend both as if they had helped to form them.

In our day one must know how to resign oneself and dare to choose between the patriotism of all and the government of the few, for one cannot at once unite the social force and activity given by the first with the guarantees of tranquillity sometimes furnished by the second.

On American Independence

Samuel Adams (1722–1803)

(1776)

Born in 1722, died in 1803; Delegate to the First Continental Congress in 1774; Signer of the Declaration of Independence in 1776; Member of the Massachusetts Convention ratifying the Constitution in 1788, Governor of Massachusetts in 1794.

OUR 1 forefathers, 'tis said, consented to be subject to the laws of Great Britain. I will not at the present time dispute it, nor mark out the limits and conditions of their submission; but will it be denied that they contracted to pay obedience and to be under the control of Great Britain because it appeared to them most beneficial in their then present circumstances and situations? We, my countrymen, have the same right to consult and provide for our happiness which they had to promote theirs. If they had a view to posterity in their contracts, it must have been to advance the felicity of their descendants. If they erred in their expectations and prospects, we can never be condemned for a conduct which they would have recommended had they foreseen our present condition.

Ye darkeners of counsel, who would make the property, lives, and religion of millions depend on the evasive interpretations of musty parchments; who would send us to antiquated charters of uncertain and contradictory meaning, to prove that the present generation are not bound to be victims to cruel and unforgiving despotism,—tell us whether our pious and generous ancestors bequeathed to us the miserable privilege of having the rewards of our honesty, industry, the fruits of those fields which they purchased and bled for, wrested from us at the will of men over whom we have no check. Did they contract for us that, with folded arms, we should expect that justice and mercy from brutal and inflamed invaders which have been denied to our supplications at the foot of the throne? Were we to hear our character as a people ridiculed with indifference? Did they promise for us that our meekness and patience should be insulted, our coasts harassed, our towns demolished and plundered, and our wives and offspring exposed to nakedness, hunger, and death, without our feeling the resentment of men, and exerting those powers of self-preservation which God has given us?

No man had once a greater veneration for Englishmen than I entertained. They were dear to me as branches of the same parental trunk, and partakers of the same religion and laws; I still view with respect the remains of the Constitution as I would a lifeless body

which had once been animated by a great and heroic soul. But when I am aroused by the din of arms; when I behold legions of foreign assassins paid by Englishmen to imbrue their hands in our blood; when I tread over the uncoffined bodies of my countrymen, neighbors, and friends; when I see the locks of a venerable father torn by savage hands, and a feeble mother, clasping her infants to her bosom, and on her knees imploring their lives from her own slaves, whom Englishmen have allured to treachery and murder; when I behold my country, once the seat of industry, peace, and plenty, changed by Englishmen to a theater of blood and misery, Heaven forgive me if I can not root out those passions which it has implanted in my bosom, and detest submission to a people who have either ceased to be human, or have not virtue enough to feel their own wretchedness and servitude!

Men who content themselves with the semblance of truth, and a display of words talk much of our obligations to Great Britain for protection. Had she a single eye to our advantage? A nation of shopkeepers 2 are very seldom so interested. Let us not be so amused with words! the extension of her commerce was her object. When she defended our coasts, she fought for her customers, and convoyed our ships loaded with wealth, which we had acquired for her by our industry. She has treated us as beasts of burden, whom the lordly masters cherish that they may carry a greater load. Let us inquire also against whom she has protected us? Against her own enemies with whom we had no quarrel, or only on her account, and against whom we always readily exerted our wealth and strength when they were required. Were these Colonies backward in giving assistance to Great Britain, when they were called upon in 1739 to aid the expedition against Cartagena? They at that time sent three thousand men to join the British army, altho the war commenced without their consent. 4

But the last war, 'tis said, was purely American. This is a vulgar error, which, like many others, has gained credit by being confidently repeated. The dispute between the courts of Great Britain and France related to the limits of Canada and Nova Scotia. The controverted territory was not claimed by any in the Colonies, but by the crown of Great Britain. It was therefore their own quarrel. The infringement of a right which England had, by the treaty of Utrecht, of trading in the Indian country of Ohio, was another cause of the war. The French seized large quantities of British manufactures and took possession of a fort which a company of British merchants and factors had erected for the security of their commerce. The war was therefore waged in defense of lands claimed by the Crown, and for the protection of British property. The French at that time had no quarrel with America, and, as appears by letters sent from their commander-in-chief to some of the Colonies, wished to remain in peace with us. 5

The part, therefore, which we then took, and the miseries to which we exposed ourselves ought to be charged to our affection to Britain. These Colonies granted more than their proportion to the support of the war. They raised, clothed, and maintained nearly twenty-five thousand men, and so sensible were the people of England of our great exertions that a message was annually sent to the House of Commons purporting "that his majesty, being highly satisfied with the zeal and vigor with which his faithful subjects in North America had exerted themselves in defense of his majesty's just rights and possessions, recommends it to the House to take the same into consideration and enable him to give them a proper compensation." 6

But what purpose can arguments of this kind answer? Did the protection we received annul our rights as men, and lay us under an obligation of being miserable? 7

Who among you, my countrymen, that is a father, would claim authority to make your child a slave because you had nourished him in infancy? 8

'Tis a strange species of generosity which requires a return infinitely more valuable than anything it could have bestowed; that demands as a reward for a defense of our property a surrender of those inestimable privileges to the arbitrary will of vindictive tyrants, which alone give value to that very property. 9

Courage, then, my countrymen; our contest is not only whether we ourselves shall be 10

free, but whether there shall be left to mankind an asylum on earth for civil and religious liberty. Dismissing, therefore, the justice of our cause as incontestable, the only question is, What is best for us to pursue in our present circumstances?

The doctrine of dependence on Great Britain is, I believe, generally exploded; but as I would attend to the honest weakness of the simplest of men, you will pardon me if I offer a few words on that subject. 11

We are now on this continent, to the astonishment of the world, three millions of souls united in one cause. We have large armies, well disciplined and appointed, with commanders inferior to none in military skill, and superior in activity and zeal. We are furnished with arsenals and stores beyond our most sanguine expectations, and foreign nations are waiting to crown our success by their alliances. There are instances of, I would say, an almost astonishing providence in our favor; our success has staggered our enemies, and almost given faith to infidels; so we may truly say it is not our own arm which has saved us. 12

The hand of Heaven appears to have led us on to be, perhaps, humble instruments and means in the great providential dispensation which is completing. We have fled from the political Sodom; let us not look back lest we perish and become a monument of infamy and derision to the world. For can we ever expect more unanimity and a better preparation for defense; more infatuation of counsel among our enemies, and more valor and zeal among ourselves? The same force and resistance which are sufficient to procure us our liberties will secure us a glorious independence and support us in the dignity of free imperial States. We can not suppose that our opposition has made a corrupt and dissipated nation more friendly to America, or created in them a greater respect for the rights of mankind. We can therefore expect a restoration and establishment of our privileges, and a compensation for the injuries we have received from their want of power, from their fears, and not from their virtues. The unanimity and valor which will effect an honorable peace can render a future contest for our liberties unnecessary. He who has strength to chain down the wolf is a madman if he let him loose without drawing his teeth and paring his nails. 13

From the day on which an accommodation takes place between England and America, on any other terms than as independent States, I shall date the ruin of this country. A politic minister will study to lull us into security by granting us the full extent of our petitions. The warm sunshine of influence would melt down the virtue which the violence of the storm rendered more firm and unyielding. In a state of tranquillity, wealth, and luxury, our descendants would forget the arts of war and the noble activity and zeal which made their ancestors invincible. Every art of corruption would be employed to loosen the bond of union which renders our resistance formidable. When the spirit of liberty, which now animates our hearts and gives success to our arms, is extinct, our numbers will accelerate our ruin and render us easier victims to tyranny. Ye abandoned minions of an infatuated ministry, if peradventure any should yet remain among us, remember that a Warren and Montgomery are numbered among the dead. Contemplate the mangled bodies of your countrymen, and then say, What should be the reward of such sacrifices? Bid us and our posterity bow the knee, supplicate the friendship, and plow, and sow, and reap, to glut the avarice of the men who have let loose on us the dogs of war to riot in our blood and hunt us from the face of the earth? If ye love wealth better than liberty, the tranquillity of servitude than the animating contest of freedom—go from us in peace. We ask not your counsels or arms. Crouch down and lick the hands which feed you. May your chains sit lightly upon you, and may posterity forget that ye were our countrymen! 14

To unite the supremacy of Great Britain and the liberty of America is utterly impossible. So vast a continent and of such a distance from the seat of empire will every day grow more unmanageable. The motion of so unwieldy a body can not be directed with any despatch and uniformity without committing to the Parliament of Great Britain powers inconsistent with our freedom. The authority and force which would be absolutely 15

necessary for the preservation of the peace and good order of this continent would put all our valuable rights within the reach of that nation.

As the administration of government requires firmer and more numerous supports in proportion to its extent, the burdens imposed on us would be excessive, and we should have the melancholy prospect of their increasing on our posterity. The scale of officers, from the rapacious and needy commissioner to the haughty governor, and from the governor, with his hungry train, to perhaps a licentious and prodigal viceroy, must be upheld by you and your children. The fleets and armies which will be employed to silence your murmurs and complaints must be supported by the fruits of your industry. 16

Britain is now, I will suppose, the seat of liberty and virtue, and its legislature consists of a body of able and independent men who govern with wisdom and justice. The time may come when all will be reversed; when its excellent constitution of government will be subverted; when, pressed by debts and taxes, it will be greedy to draw to itself an increase of revenue from every distant province in order to ease its own burdens; when the influence of the crown, strengthened by luxury and a universal profligacy of manners, will have tainted every heart, broken down every fence of liberty and rendered us a nation of tame and contented vassals; when a general election will be nothing but a general auction of boroughs, and when the Parliament, the grand council of the nation, and once the faithful guardian of the State, and a terror to evil ministers, will be degenerated into a body of sycophants, dependent and venal, always ready to confirm any measures, and little more than a public court for registering royal edicts. 17

Such, it is possible, may some time or other be the state of Great Britain. What will, at that period, be the duty of the Colonies? Will they be still bound to unconditional submission? Must they always continue an appendage to our government and follow it implicitly through every change that can happen to it? Wretched condition, indeed, of millions of freemen as good as ourselves! Will you say that we now govern equitably, and that there is no danger of such revolution? Would to God that this were true! But you will not always say the same. Who shall judge whether we govern equitably or not? Can you give the Colonies any security that such a period will never come? No. *The period, countrymen, is already come!* The calamities were at our door. The rod of oppression was raised over us. We were roused from our slumbers, and may we never sink into repose until we can convey a clear and undisputed inheritance to our posterity! This day we are called upon to give a glorious example of what the wisest and best of men were rejoiced to view only in speculation. This day presents the world with the most august spectacle that its annals ever unfolded—millions of freemen, deliberately and voluntarily forming themselves into a society for their common defense and common happiness. Immortal spirits of Hampden, Locke, and Sidney, will it not add to your benevolent joys to behold your posterity rising to the dignity of men, and evincing to the world the reality and expediency of your systems, and in the actual enjoyment of that equal liberty, which you were happy when on earth in delineating and recommending to mankind? 18

Other nations have received their laws from conquerors; some are indebted for a constitution to the suffering of their ancestors through revolving centuries. The people of this country, alone, have formally and deliberately chosen a government for themselves, and with open and uninfluenced consent bound themselves into a social compact. Here no man proclaims his birth or wealth as a title to honorable distinction, or to sanctify ignorance and vice with the name of hereditary authority. He who has most zeal and ability to promote public felicity, let him be the servant of the public. This is the only line of distinction drawn by nature. Leave the bird of night to the obscurity for which nature intended him, and expect only from the eagle to brush the clouds with his wings and look boldly in the face of the sun. 19

If there is any man so base or so weak as to prefer a dependence on Great Britain to the dignity and happiness of living a member of a free and independent nation, let me tell him that necessity now demands what the generous principle of patriotism should have dictated. 20

We have no other alternative than independence, or the most ignominious and galling 21

servitude. The legions of our enemies thicken on our plains; desolation and death mark their bloody career, while the mangled corpses of our countrymen seem to cry out to us as a voice from heaven.

Our Union is now complete; our Constitution composed, established, and approved. 22
You are now the guardians of your own liberties: We may justly address you as the decemviri did the Romans, and say: “Nothing that we propose can pass into a law without your consent. Be yourselves, O Americans, the authors of those laws on which your happiness depends.”

You have now in the field armies sufficient to repel the whole force of your enemies and their base and mercenary auxiliaries. The hearts of your soldiers beat high with the spirit of freedom; they are animated with the justice of their cause, and while they grasp their swords can look up to Heaven for assistance. Your adversaries are composed of wretches who laugh at the rights of humanity, who turn religion into derision, and would, for higher wages, direct their swords against their leaders or their country. Go on, then, in your generous enterprise with gratitude to Heaven for past success, and confidence of it in the future. For my own part I ask no greater blessing than to share with you the common danger and common glory. If I have a wish dearer to my soul than that my ashes may be mingled with those of a Warren and Montgomery, it is that these American States may never cease to be free and independent. 23

Note 1. From a speech delivered at the State House in Philadelphia, “to a very numerous audience,” on August 1, 1776. Abridged. [[back](#)]

Note 2. Napoleon afterward used this phrase and has often been credited with its authorship. [[back](#)]

The Federalist No. 2

JOHN JAY

October 31, 1787

To the People of the State of New York.

WHEN the people of America reflect that they are now called upon to decide a question, which, in its consequences, must prove one of the most important, that ever engaged their attention, the propriety of their taking a very comprehensive, as well as a very serious view of it, will be evident.

Nothing is more certain than the indispensable necessity of Government, and it is equally undeniable, that whenever and however it is instituted, the people must cede to it some of their natural rights, in order to vest it with requisite powers. It is well worthy of consideration therefore, whether it would conduce more to the interest of the people of America, that they should, to all general purposes, be one nation, under one fœderal Government, than that they should divide themselves into separate confederacies, and give to the head of each, the same kind of powers which they are advised to place in one national Government.

It has until lately been a received and uncontradicted opinion, that the prosperity of the people of America depended on their continuing firmly united, and the wishes, prayers, and efforts of our best and wisest Citizens have been constantly directed to that object. But Politicians now appear, who insist that this opinion is erroneous, and that instead of looking for safety and happiness in union, we ought to seek it in a division of the States into distinct confederacies or sovereignties. However extraordinary this new doctrine may appear, it nevertheless has its

From *The Independent Journal*, October 31, 1787. This essay appeared on November 1 in *The Daily Advertiser* and on November 2 in *The New-York Packet*.

advocates; and certain characters who were much opposed to it formerly, are at present of the number. Whatever may be the arguments or inducements, which have wrought this change in the sentiments and declarations of these Gentlemen, it certainly would not be wise in the people at large to adopt these new political tenets without being fully convinced that they are founded in truth and sound Policy.

It has often given me pleasure to observe, that Independent America was not composed of detached and distant territories, but that one connected, fertile, wide spreading country was the portion of our western sons of liberty. Providence has in a particular manner blessed it with a variety of soils and productions, and watered it with innumerable streams, for the delight and accommodation of its inhabitants. A succession of navigable waters forms a kind of chain round its borders, as if to bind it together; while the most noble rivers in the world, running at convenient distances, present them with highways for the easy communication of friendly aids, and the mutual transportation and exchange of their various commodities.

With equal pleasure I have as often taken notice, that Providence has been pleased to give this one connected country, to one united people, a people descended from the same ancestors, speaking the same language, professing the same religion, attached to the same principles of government, very similar in their manners and customs, and who, by their joint counsels, arms and efforts, fighting side by side throughout a long and bloody war, have nobly established their general Liberty and Independence.

This country and this people seem to have been made for each other, and it appears as if it was the design of Providence, that an inheritance so proper and convenient for a band of brethren, united to each other by the strongest ties, should never be split into a number of unsocial, jealous and alien sovereignties.

Similar sentiments have hitherto prevailed among all orders

and denominations of men among us. To all general purposes we have uniformly been one people — each individual citizen everywhere enjoying the same national rights, privileges, and protection. As a nation we have made peace and war — as a nation we have vanquished our common enemies — as a nation we have formed alliances and made treaties, and entered into various compacts and conventions with foreign States.

A strong sense of the value and blessings of Union induced the people, at a very early period, to institute a Fœderal Government to preserve and perpetuate it. They formed it almost as soon as they had a political existence; nay at a time, when their habitations were in flames, when many of their Citizens were bleeding, and when the progress of hostility and desolation left little room for those calm and mature enquiries and reflections, which must ever precede the formation of a wise and well balanced government for a free people. It is not to be wondered at that a Government instituted in times so inauspicious, should on experiment be found greatly deficient and inadequate to the purpose it was intended to answer.

This intelligent people perceived and regretted these defects. Still continuing no less attached to union, than enamoured of liberty, they observed the danger, which immediately threatened the former and more remotely the latter; and being persuaded that ample security for both, could only be found in a national Government more wisely framed, they, as with one voice, convened the late Convention at Philadelphia, to take that important subject under consideration.

This Convention, composed of men, who possessed the confidence of the people, and many of whom had become highly distinguished by their patriotism, virtue and wisdom, in times which tried the minds and hearts of men, undertook the arduous task. In the mild season of peace, with minds unoccupied by other subjects, they passed many months in cool uninterrupted and daily consultations: and finally, without having been awed

by power, or influenced by any passions except love for their Country, they presented and recommended to the people the plan produced by their joint and very unanimous counsels.

Admit, for so is the fact, that this plan is only *recommended*, not imposed, yet let it be remembered, that it is neither recommended to *blind* approbation, nor to *blind* reprobation; but to that sedate and candid consideration, which the magnitude and importance of the subject demand, and which it certainly ought to receive. But this, (as was remarked in the foregoing number of this Paper,) is more to be wished than expected that it may be so considered and examined. Experience on a former occasion teaches us not to be too sanguine in such hopes. It is not yet forgotten, that well grounded apprehensions of imminent danger induced the people of America to form the Memorable Congress of 1774. That Body recommended certain measures to their Constituents, and the event proved their wisdom; yet it is fresh in our memories how soon the Press began to teem with Pamphlets and weekly Papers against those very measures. Not only many of the Officers of Government who obeyed the dictates of personal interest, but others from a mistaken estimate of consequences, or the undue influence of former attachments, or whose ambition aimed at objects which did not correspond with the public good, were indefatigable in their endeavours to persuade the people to reject the advice of that Patriotic Congress. Many indeed were deceived and deluded, but the great majority of the people reasoned and decided judiciously; and happy they are in reflecting that they did so.

They considered that the Congress was composed of many wise and experienced men. That being convened from different parts of the country, they brought with them and communicated to each other a variety of useful information. That in the course of the time they passed together in enquiring into and discussing the true interests of their country, they must have acquired very accurate knowledge on that head. That they were individu-

ally interested in the public liberty and prosperity, and therefore that it was not less their inclination, than their duty, to recommend only such measures, as after the most mature deliberation they really thought prudent and adviseable.

These and similar considerations then induced the people to rely greatly on the judgment and integrity of the Congress; and they took their advice, notwithstanding the various arts and endeavours used to deter and dissuade them from it. But if the people at large had reason to confide in the men of that Congress, few of whom had then been fully tried or generally known, still greater reason have they now to respect the judgment and advice of the Convention, for it is well known that some of the most distinguished members of that Congress, who have been since tried and justly approved for patriotism and abilities, and who have grown old in acquiring political information, were also members of this Convention and carried into it their accumulated knowledge and experience.

It is worthy of remark that not only the first, but every succeeding Congress, as well as the late Convention, have invariably joined with the people in thinking that the prosperity of America depended on its Union. To preserve and perpetuate it, was the great object of the people in forming that Convention, and it is also the great object of the plan which the Convention has advised them to adopt. With what propriety therefore, or for what good purposes, are attempts at this particular period, made by some men, to depreciate the importance of the Union? or why is it suggested that three or four confederacies would be better than one? I am persuaded in my own mind, that the people have always thought right on this subject, and that their universal and uniform attachment to the cause of the Union, rests on great and weighty reasons, which I shall endeavour to develop and explain in some ensuing papers. They who promote the idea of substituting a number of distinct confederacies in the room of

the plan of the Convention, seem clearly to foresee that the rejection of it would put the continuance of the Union in the utmost jeopardy. That certainly would be the case, and I sincerely wish that it may be as clearly foreseen by every good Citizen, that whenever the dissolution of the Union arrives, America will have reason to exclaim in the words of the Poet, "FAREWELL, A LONG FAREWELL, TO ALL MY GREATNESS."

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 America: II. (1818–1865). 1906.

I. The First Bunker Hill Monument Oration

Daniel Webster (1782–1852)

(1825)

Born in 1782, died in 1852; Member of Congress from New Hampshire in 1813–17, and from Massachusetts in 1823–27. United States Senator from Massachusetts in 1827–41; defeated for the Presidency in 1836; an unsuccessful candidate for the Whig nomination afterward; Secretary of State in 1841; negotiated the Ashburton Treaty in 1842; again elected Senator in 1845; made his “Seventh of March Speech” in 1850; Secretary of State in 1850; again unsuccessful for the Whig nomination for President in 1852.

THIS 1 uncounted multitude before me and around me proves the feeling which the occasion has excited. These thousands of human faces, glowing with sympathy and joy, and from the impulses of a common gratitude turned reverently to heaven in this spacious temple of the firmament, proclaim that the day, the place, and the purpose of our assembling have made a deep impression on our hearts. ¹

If, indeed, there be anything in local association fit to affect the mind of man, we need not strive to repress the emotions which agitate us here. We are among the sepulchers of our fathers. We are on ground distinguished by their valor, their constancy, and the shedding of their blood. We are here, not to fix an uncertain date in our annals, nor to draw into notice an obscure and unknown spot. If our humble purpose had never been conceived, if we ourselves had never been born, the 17th of June, 1775, would have been a day on which all subsequent history would have poured its light, and the eminence where we stand a point of attraction to the eyes of successive generations. ²

The Society whose organ I am was formed for the purpose of rearing some honorable and durable monument to the memory of the early friends of American Independence. They have thought that for this object no time could be more propitious than the present prosperous and peaceful period; that no place could claim preference over this memorable spot; and that no day could be more auspicious to the undertaking than the anniversary of the battle which was here fought. The foundation of that monument we have now laid. With solemnities suited to the occasion, with prayers to Almighty God for His blessing, and in the midst of this cloud of witnesses, we have begun the work. We trust it will be prosecuted, and that, springing from a broad foundation, rising high in massive solidity and unadorned grandeur, it may remain as long as heaven permits the ³

works of man to last, a fit emblem, both of the events in memory of which it is raised, and of the gratitude of those who have reared it.

We know, indeed, that the record of illustrious actions is most safely deposited in the universal remembrance of mankind. We know, that if we could cause this structure to ascend, not only till it reached the skies, but till it pierced them, its broad surfaces could still contain but part of that which, in an age of knowledge, hath already been spread over the earth, and which history charges itself with making known to all future times. We know that no inscription on entablatures less broad than the earth itself can carry information of the events we commemorate where it has not already gone; and that no structure, which shall not outlive the duration of letters and knowledge among men, can prolong the memorial. But our object is, by this edifice, to show our own deep sense of the value and importance of the achievements of our ancestors; and by presenting this work of gratitude to the eye, to keep alive similar sentiments, and to foster a constant regard for the principles of the Revolution. Human beings are composed not of reason only, but of imagination also, and sentiment; and that is neither wasted nor misapplied which is appropriated to the purpose of giving right direction to sentiments, and opening proper springs of feeling in the heart.

We wish that, in those days of disaster, which, as they come upon all nations, must be expected to come upon us also, desponding patriotism may turn its eyes hitherward, and be assured that the foundations of our national power are still strong. We wish that this column, rising toward heaven among the pointed spires of so many temples dedicated to God, may contribute also to produce, in all minds, a pious feeling of dependence and gratitude. We wish, finally, that the last object to the sight of him who leaves his native shore, and the first to gladden him who revisits it, may be something which shall remind him of the liberty and the glory of his country. Let it rise! let it rise, till it meet the sun in his coming; let the earliest light of the morning gild it, and parting day linger and play on its summit.

We still have among us some of those who were active agents in the scenes of 1775, and who are now here, from every quarter of New England, to visit once more, and under circumstances so affecting—I had almost said so overwhelming—this renowned theater of their courage and patriotism.

VENERABLE MEN! you have come down to us from a former generation. 2 Heaven has bounteously lengthened out your lives, that you might behold this joyous day. You are now where you stood fifty years ago, this very hour, with your brothers and your neighbors, shoulder to shoulder, in the strife for your country. Behold, how altered! The same heavens are indeed over your heads; the same ocean rolls at your feet; but all else, how changed! You hear now no roar of hostile cannon; you see no mixed volumes of smoke and flame rising from burning Charlestown. The ground strewed with the dead and the dying; the impetuous charge; the steady and successful repulse; the loud call to repeated assault; the summoning of all that is manly to repeated resistance; a thousand bosoms freely and fearlessly bared in an instant to whatever of terror there may be in war and death—all these you have witnessed, but you witness them no more.

All is peace. The heights of yonder metropolis, its towers and roofs, which you then saw filled with wives and children and countrymen in distress and terror, and looking with unutterable emotions for the issue of the combat, have presented you to-day with the sight of its whole, happy population, come out to welcome and greet you with a universal jubilee. Yonder proud ships, by a felicity of position appropriately lying at the foot of this mount, and seeming fondly to cling around it, are not means of annoyance to you, but your country's own means of distinction and defense. All is peace; and God has granted you this sight of your country's happiness, ere you slumber in the grave. He has allowed you to behold and to partake the reward of your patriotic toils; and he has allowed us, your sons and countrymen, to meet you here, and in the name of the present generation, in the name of your country, in the name of liberty, to thank you!

But, alas! you are not all here! Time and the sword have thinned your ranks. Prescott, Putnam, Stark, Brooks, Reed, Pomeroy, Bridge!—our eyes seek for you in vain amid this

broken band. You are gathered to your fathers, and live only to your country in her grateful remembrance and your own bright example. But let us not too much grieve that you have met the common fate of men. You lived at least long enough to know that your work had been nobly and successfully accomplished. You lived to see your country's independence established, and to sheathe your swords from war. On the light of Liberty you saw arise the light of Peace, like

“Another morn,

Risen on mid-noon”; 3

and the sky on which you closed your eyes was cloudless.

But, ah! Him! 4 the first great martyr in this great cause! Him! the premature victim of his own self-devoting heart! Him! the head of our civil councils, and the destined leader of our military bands, whom nothing brought hither but the unquenchable fire of his own spirit! Him! cut off by Providence in the hour of overwhelming anxiety and thick gloom; falling ere he saw the star of his country rise; pouring out his generous blood like water, before he knew whether it would fertilize a land of freedom or of bondage!—how shall I struggle with the emotions that stifle the utterance of thy name? Our poor work may perish; but thine shall endure! This monument may molder away; the solid ground it rests upon may sink down to a level with the sea; but thy memory shall not fail! Wheresoever among men a heart shall be found that beats to the transports of patriotism and liberty, its aspirations shall be to claim kindred with thy spirit. 10

But the scene amid which we stand does not permit us to confine our thoughts or our sympathies to those fearless spirits who hazarded or lost their lives on this consecrated spot. We have the happiness to rejoice here in the presence of a most worthy representation of the survivors of the whole Revolutionary army. 11

VETERANS! you are the remnant of many a well-fought field. You bring with you marks of honor from Trenton and Monmouth, from Yorktown, Camden, Bennington, and Saratoga. VETERANS OF HALF A CENTURY! when in your youthful days you put everything at hazard in your country's cause, good as that cause was, and sanguine as youth is, still your fondest hopes did not stretch onward to an hour like this! At a period to which you could not reasonably have expected to arrive, at a moment of national prosperity such as you could never have foreseen, you are now met here to enjoy the fellowship of old soldiers, and to receive the overflowings of a universal gratitude. 12

But your agitated countenances and your heaving breasts inform me that even this is not an unmixed joy. I perceive that a tumult of contending feelings rushes upon you. The images of the dead, as well as the persons of the living, present themselves before you. The scene overwhelms you, and I turn from it. May the Father of all mercies smile upon your declining years and bless, them! And when you shall here have exchanged your embraces, when you shall once more have pressed the hands which have been so often extended to give succor in adversity, or grasped in the exultation of victory, then look abroad upon this lovely land which your young valor defended, and mark the happiness with which it is filled; yea, look abroad upon the whole earth, and see what a name you have contributed to give to your country, and what a praise you have added to freedom, and then rejoice in the sympathy and gratitude which beam upon your last days from the improved condition of mankind! 13

Information of these events, circulating throughout the world, at length reached the ears of one who now hears me. 5 He has not forgotten the emotion which the fame of Bunker Hill, and the name of Warren, excited in his youthful breast. 14

Sir, we are assembled to commemorate the establishment of great public principles of liberty and to do honor to the distinguished dead. The occasion is too severe for eulogy of the living. But, sir, your interesting relation to this country, the peculiar circumstances which surround you and surround us, call on me to express the happiness which we derive from your presence and aid in this solemn commemoration. 15

Fortunate, fortunate man! with what measure of devotion will you not thank God for the circumstances of your extraordinary life! You are connected with both hemispheres and 16

with two generations. Heaven saw fit to ordain that the electric spark of liberty should be conducted, through you, from the New World to the Old; and we, who are now here to perform this duty of patriotism, have all of us long ago received it in charge from our fathers to cherish your name and your virtues. You will account it an instance of your good fortune, sir, that you crossed the seas to visit us at a time which enables you to be present at this solemnity. You now behold the field, the renown of which reached you in the heart of France, and caused a thrill in your ardent bosom. You see the lines of the little redoubt thrown up by the incredible diligence of Prescott; defended, to the last extremity, by his lion-hearted valor, and within which the corner-stone of our monument has now taken its position. You see where Warren fell, and where Parker, Gardner, McClary, Moore, and other early patriots fell with him. Those who survived that day, and whose lives have been prolonged to the present hour, are now around you. Some of them you have known in the trying scenes of the war. Behold! they now stretch forth their feeble arms to embrace you. Behold! they raise their trembling voices to invoke the blessing of God on you and yours for ever.

Sir, you have assisted us in laying the foundation of this structure. You have heard us rehearse, with our feeble commendation, the names of departed patriots. Monuments and eulogy belong to the dead. We give them this day to Warren and his associates. On other occasions they have been given to your more immediate companions in arms, to Washington, to Greene, to Gates, to Sullivan, and to Lincoln. We have become reluctant to grant these, our highest and last honors, further. We would gladly hold them yet back from the little remnant of that immortal band. "*Serus in cœlum redeas.*" Illustrious as are your merits, yet far, oh, very far distant be the day, when any inscription shall bear your name, or any tongue pronounce its eulogy! 17

It is owing, perhaps, to this truth, that the interesting struggle of the Greeks has been suffered to go on so long, without a direct interference, either to wrest that country from its present masters, or to execute the system of pacification by force, and, with united strength, lay the neck of Christian and civilized Greek at the foot of the barbarian Turk. Let us thank God that we live in an age when something has influence besides the bayonet, and when the sternest authority does not venture to encounter the scorching power of public reproach. Any attempt of the kind I have mentioned should be met by one universal burst of indignation; the air of the civilized world ought to be made too warm to be comfortably breathed by any one who would hazard it. 18

It is, indeed, a touching reflection that, while in the fulness of our country's happiness we rear this monument to her honor, we look for instruction in our undertaking to a country which is now in fearful contest, not for works of art or memorials of glory, but for her own existence. 6 Let her be assured that she is not forgotten in the world; that her efforts are applauded, and that constant prayers ascend for her success. And let us cherish a confident hope for her final triumph. If the true spark of religious and civil liberty be kindled, it will burn. Human agency can not extinguish it. Like the earth's central fire, it may be smothered for a time; the ocean may overwhelm it; mountains may press it down; but its inherent and unconquerable force will heave both the ocean and the land, and at some time or other, in some place or other, the volcano will break out and flame up to heaven. 19

And now, let us indulge an honest exultation in the conviction of the benefit which the example of our country has produced, and is likely to produce, on human freedom and human happiness. Let us endeavor to comprehend in all its magnitude, and to feel in all its importance, the part assigned to us in the great drama of human affairs. We are placed at the head of the system of representative and popular governments. Thus far our example shows that such governments are compatible, not only with respectability and power, but with repose, with peace, with security of personal rights, with good laws, and a just administration. 20

We are not propagandists. Wherever other systems are preferred, either as being thought better in themselves, or as better suited to existing conditions, we leave the preference to be enjoyed. Our history hitherto proves, however, that the popular form is practicable, 21

and that with wisdom and knowledge men may govern themselves; and the duty incumbent on us is to preserve the consistency of this cheering example, and take care that nothing may weaken its authority with the world. If, in our case, the representative system ultimately fail, popular governments must be pronounced impossible. No combination of circumstances more favorable to the experiment can ever be expected to occur. The last hopes of mankind, therefore, rest with us; and if it should be proclaimed that our example had become an argument against the experiment, the knell of popular liberty would be sounded throughout the earth.

These are excitements to duty; but they are not suggestions of doubt. Our history and our condition, all that is gone before us, and all that surrounds us, authorize the belief, that popular governments, tho subject to occasional variations, in form perhaps not always for the better, may yet, in their general character, be as durable and permanent as other systems. We know, indeed, that in our country any other is impossible. The principle of free government adheres to the American soil. It is bedded in it, immovable as its mountains. 22

And let the sacred obligations which have devolved on this generation, and on us, sink deep into our hearts. Those who established our liberty and our government are daily dropping from among us. The great trust now descends to new hands. Let us apply ourselves to that which is presented to us, as our appropriate object. We can win no laurels in a war for independence. Earlier and worthier hands have gathered them all. Nor are there places for us by the side of Solon, and Alfred, and other founders of states. Our fathers have filled them. But there remains to us a great duty of defense and preservation; and there is opened to us, also, a noble pursuit, to which the spirit of the times strongly invites us. Our proper business is improvement. Let our age be the age of improvement. In a day of peace, let us advance the arts of peace and the works of peace. Let us develop the resources of our land, call forth its powers, build up its institutions, promote all its great interests, and see whether we also, in our day and generation, may not perform something worthy to be remembered. Let us cultivate a true spirit of union and harmony. In pursuing the great objects which our condition points out to us, let us act under a settled conviction, and an habitual feeling, that these twenty-four States are one country. Let our conceptions be enlarged to the circle of our duties. Let us extend our ideas over the whole of the vast field in which we are called to act. Let our object be, OUR COUNTRY, OUR WHOLE COUNTRY, AND NOTHING BUT OUR COUNTRY. And, by the blessing of God, may that country itself become a vast and splendid monument, not of oppression and terror, but of wisdom, of peace, and of liberty, upon which the world may gaze with admiration for ever! 23

Note 1. Delivered at the laying of the corner-stone of the monument on June 17, 1825. Abridged. [[back](#)]

Note 2. Some forty survivors of the Battle of Bunker Hill were present to hear this address. [[back](#)]

Note 3. These words are from the first book of Milton's "Paradise Lost," and occur in the remark made by Adam to Eve on discovering the approach of "The angelic Virtue," as follows:

"Haste hither, Eve, and, worth thy sight, behold
Eastward among these trees what glorious Shape
Comes this way moving: Seems another morn
Risen on mid-noon."

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Note 4. Major-General Joseph Warren. [[back](#)]

Note 5. Lafayette, who sat among the Revolutionary officers, facing Webster as he spoke. [[back](#)]

Note 6. Greece. [[back](#)]

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The Star-Spangled Banner

WORDS BY FRANCIS SCOTT KEY

As we learn from the previous selection, Francis Scott Key (1779–1843), Washington lawyer and amateur poet, was inspired to pen the verses of “The Star-Spangled Banner” by the unlikely success of American troops resisting the British attack on Baltimore’s Fort McHenry on September 13, 1814, two days after the burning of the capital. Nearly all American schoolchildren are taught the words of Key’s first stanza, now our national anthem, and for the rest of their lives they hear it sung on patriotic holidays and at sporting events. Rarely, however, do we attend to the words. Many whose hearts are stirred by hearing the anthem sung probably could not tell you what it literally means or what Key intended to convey.

What is the meaning of the poem’s opening question: “O! say can you see by the dawn’s early light / What so proudly we hailed at the twilight’s last gleaming”? How does it differ from the question that concludes the first stanza: “O! say does that star-spangled banner yet wave / O’er the land of the free and the home of the brave?” Why, according to the song, is the waving banner important? Why sing a song about a flag? The last stanza turns from the present war to the future. For what does it call? What relation does the song suggest between the flag and the motto “In God is our trust”? How does singing the song make you feel? Does thinking about the anthem’s words alter those feelings?

O! say can you see by the dawn’s early light
What so proudly we hailed at the twilight’s last gleaming;
Whose broad stripes and bright stars thro’ the perilous fight,
O’er the ramparts we watched were so gallantly streaming?
And the rockets’ red glare, the bombs bursting in air,

Gave proof through the night that our flag was still there.
O! say does that star-spangled banner yet wave
O'er the land of the free and the home of the brave?

On the shore, dimly seen through the mists of the deep,
Where the foe's haughty host in dread silence reposes,
What is that which the breeze, o'er the towering steep,
As it fitfully blows, half conceals, half discloses?
Now it catches the gleam of the morning's first beam,
In full glory reflected now shines in the stream:
'Tis the star-spangled banner! O! long may it wave
O'er the land of the free and the home of the brave!

And where is that band who so vauntingly swore
That the havoc of war and the battle's confusion
A home and a country should leave us no more!
Their blood has washed out their foul footsteps' pollution.
No refuge could save the hireling and slave
From the terror of flight, or the gloom of the grave:
And the star-spangled banner in triumph doth wave
O'er the land of the free and the home of the brave!

O! thus be it ever, when freemen shall stand
Between their loved home and the war's desolation!
Blest with vict'ry and peace, may the heav'n rescued land
Praise the Power that hath made and preserved us a nation.
Then conquer we must, when our cause it is just,
And this be our motto: "In God is our trust."
And the star-spangled banner in triumph shall wave
O'er the land of the free and the home of the brave!

My Country, 'Tis of Thee

WORDS BY SAMUEL F. SMITH

Until it was officially replaced by “The Star Spangled-Banner” in 1931, “My Country, 'Tis of Thee” served as our de facto national anthem. It was written in 1831 by Samuel Francis Smith (1808–1895), Baptist minister, journalist, and author. Though it is set to the music of Britain’s national anthem, Smith came to it by way of a German song. Also known as “America,” this song was first performed in public on July 4, 1831, at a children’s Independence Day celebration at Park Street Church in Boston.

What is it about “My Country” that the song primarily celebrates? Several verses explicitly refer to the Divine: for what reasons and for what purposes? Several verses speak about education and school: what role do they play in the nation’s story? What, according to the song, do we owe to our ancestors? To what—ancestors, or schools, or God, or something else—are we indebted for “Sweet Freedom”? How does singing this song make you feel?

My country, 'tis of thee,
Sweet Land of Liberty
Of thee I sing;
Land where my fathers died,
Land of the pilgrims' pride,
From every mountain side
Let Freedom ring!

My native country, thee,
Land of the noble free,
Thy name I love;
I love thy rocks and rills,

Thy woods and templed hills;
My heart with rapture thrills,
Like that above.

Let music swell the breeze,
And ring from all the trees
Sweet Freedom's song;
Let mortal tongues awake;
Let all that breathe partake;
Let rocks their silence break,
The sound prolong.

Our fathers' God, to Thee,
Author of Liberty,
To Thee we sing,
Long may our land be bright
With Freedom's holy light;
Protect us by Thy might
Great God, our King.

The Battle Hymn of the Republic

WORDS BY JULIA WARD HOWE

“The Battle Hymn of the Republic” was written in 1861 as an abolitionist song by Julia Ward Howe (1819–1910), a prominent American abolitionist and social activist. While witnessing a review of Union troops in Washington, D.C., Howe heard the Union army marching song “John Brown’s Body” set to a tune written by William Steffe (1830–1890). The stirring tune inspired her to write new lyrics: this poem came to her in the middle of the night and she scrawled the verses in the dark, using an old stump of a pen. It became a popular Union song during the rest of the Civil War and after.

The song is called a hymn: is there a difference between a hymn and an anthem? What is a battle hymn? The song seems to offer an interpretation of the Civil War: what is its teaching? Other songs collected here also make reference to God and speak of His relation to our national affairs: how does this one differ from the others? The second-to-last line of stanza five originally read, “As He died to make men holy, let us die to make men free”: what do you make of the substitution of “live” for “die”? How can what was a partisan Union song become a song of the entire nation? How does singing this song make you feel?

Mine eyes have seen the glory of the coming of the Lord;
He is trampling out the vintage where the grapes of wrath are stored;
He hath loosed the fateful lightning of His terrible swift sword:
His truth is marching on.

(Chorus)

Glory, glory Hallelujah!
Glory, glory Hallelujah!

Glory, glory Hallelujah!
His truth is marching on.

I have seen Him in the watch-fires of a hundred circling camps,
They have builded Him an altar in the evening dews and damps;
I can read His righteous sentence by the dim and flaring lamps:
His day is marching on.

(Chorus)

Glory, glory Hallelujah!
Glory, glory Hallelujah!
Glory, glory Hallelujah!
His day is marching on.

I have read a fiery gospel writ in burnished rows of steel:
“As ye deal with my contemners, so with you my grace shall deal;
Let the Hero, born of woman, crush the serpent with his heel,
Since God is marching on.”

(Chorus)

Glory, glory Hallelujah!
Glory, glory Hallelujah!
Glory, glory Hallelujah!
Since God is marching on.

He has sounded forth the trumpet that shall never call retreat;
He is sifting out the hearts of men before His judgment-seat:
Oh, be swift, my soul, to answer Him! be jubilant, my feet!
Our God is marching on.

(Chorus)

Glory, glory Hallelujah!
Glory, glory Hallelujah!
Glory, glory Hallelujah!
Our God is marching on.

In the beauty of the lilies Christ was born across the sea,
With a glory in his bosom that transfigures you and me:

As he died to make men holy, let us die* to make men free,
While God is marching on.

(Chorus)

Glory, glory Hallelujah!
Glory, glory Hallelujah!
Glory, glory Hallelujah!
While God is marching on.

He is coming like the glory of the morning on the wave,
He is wisdom to the mighty, He is succour† to the brave;
So the world shall be His footstool, and the soul of Time‡ His slave,
Our God is marching on.

(Chorus)

Glory, glory Hallelujah!
Glory, glory Hallelujah!
Glory, glory Hallelujah!
Our God is marching on.

* In today's version, “live” is usually substituted for the original “die.”

† In today's version, “honor” is usually substituted for the original “succour.”

‡ In today's version, “wrong” is usually substituted for the original “Time.”

Gettysburg Address

ABRAHAM LINCOLN

The creed of the American Republic, as enunciated in the Declaration of Independence, begins with the claim, offered as a self-evident truth, that “all men are created equal.” Yet our embrace of the principle was long embarrassed in practice by the existence of chattel slavery, present at the Founding but greatly increased through the first half of the nineteenth century. Critics of the Declaration openly called human equality “a self-evident lie,” and the infamous Dred Scott decision (1857) gave voice to a racist and exclusionary interpretation of the Declaration, insisting that its “all men” referred only to “all white men” who were the equals of British subjects living in Britain. No one did more to oppose this (mis)interpretation than our sixteenth president, Abraham Lincoln (1809–1865), who famously claimed that he had “never had a feeling politically that did not spring from the sentiments embodied in the Declaration of Independence.” Lincoln’s most famous defense of equal-*

* Throughout his career, Lincoln offered numerous statements about the meaning of the Declaration, calling it “the father of all moral principle” in each subsequent generation of Americans and “the sheet anchor of republicanism.” In his speech on the Dred Scott decision, he sought to vindicate the inclusiveness of the Declaration’s assertion of human equality:

I think the authors of that notable instrument intended to include all men, but they did not intend to declare all men equal in all respects. They did not mean to say all were equal in color, size, intellect, moral developments, or social capacity. They defined with tolerable distinctness, in what respects they did consider all men created equal—equal in “certain inalienable rights, among which are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.” This they said, and this they meant. They did not mean to assert the obvious untruth, that all were then actually enjoying that equality, nor yet, that they were about to confer it immediately upon them. In fact they had no power to confer such a boon. They meant simply to declare the right, so that the enforcement of it might follow as fast as circumstances should permit. They meant to set up a standard maxim for free society, which should be familiar

ity appears in the Gettysburg Address, delivered on November 19, 1863, in the midst of a civil war whose deepest cause was the institution of slavery. Here Lincoln revisits the Declaration of Independence, summoning the nation to achieve a “new birth of freedom” through renewed dedication to the founding proposition of human equality.

How does Lincoln understand the key terms of the creed, and in particular, the relation between equality and freedom? What is the difference between “holding” equality as a “self-evident truth” and regarding it as a “proposition” to which we are dedicated? What is the difference between the “new birth of freedom,” coming from the bloody war, and the original birth of the nation, “conceived in liberty”? What do you think is the meaning of equality today, and what is its relation to freedom?

Four score and seven years ago our fathers brought forth on this continent, a new nation, conceived in Liberty, and dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal.

Now we are engaged in a great civil war, testing whether that nation, or any nation so conceived and so dedicated, can long endure. We are met on a great battle-field of that war. We have come to dedicate a portion of that field, as a final resting place for those who here gave their lives that that nation might live. It is altogether fitting and proper that we should do this.

But, in a larger sense, we can not dedicate—we can not consecrate—we can not hallow—this ground. The brave men, living and dead, who struggled here, have consecrated it, far above our poor power to add or detract. The world will little note, nor long remember what we say here, but it can never forget what they did here. It is for us the living, rather, to be dedicated here to the unfinished work which they who fought here have thus far so nobly advanced. It is rather for us to be here dedicated to the great task remaining before us—that from these honored dead we take increased devotion to that cause for which they gave the last full measure of devotion—that we here highly resolve that these dead shall not have died in vain—that this nation, under God, shall have a new birth of freedom—and that government of the people, by the people, for the people, shall not perish from the earth.

to all, and revered by all; constantly looked to, constantly labored for, and even though never perfectly attained, constantly approximated, and thereby constantly spreading and deepening its influence, and augmenting the happiness and value of life to all people of all colors everywhere.

True Americanism

THEODORE ROOSEVELT

America, it is rightly said, is the world's first cosmopolitan nation. Our fellow citizens come from every corner of the earth. A small few may still trace their origins to the original settlers, but most of us are children or grandchildren of immigrants. What, then, do we have in common, and what unites us as Americans? Today, questions of identity are often discussed under the heading of multiculturalism: people are viewed and view themselves as members of racial and ethnic subcultures, as hyphenated Americans (for example, African-, Mexican-, Chinese-, etc.). Yet this entire volume assumes that notwithstanding our enriching differences, there are deep beliefs, sentiments, and practices that do and should unite us as American citizens.

Questions about our identity are not new. They were especially prominent in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, as European immigrants, not always warmly welcomed, flooded the American shores. In this essay (1894), Theodore Roosevelt (1858–1916) addresses the question of immigration and American identity. What criteria does he suggest for becoming and being American? Are they sufficient to make one out of many? Considering the even greater ethnic and religious heterogeneity of modern-day America, how might you modify Roosevelt's suggestions regarding "True Americanism"?

Patriotism was once defined as "the last refuge of a scoundrel"; and somebody has recently remarked that when Dr. Johnson gave this definition he was ignorant of the infinite possibilities contained in the word "reform." Of course both gibes were quite justifiable, in so far as they were aimed at people who use noble names to cloak base purposes. Equally of course the man shows little wisdom and a low sense of duty who fails to see that love of country is

one of the elemental virtues, even though scoundrels play upon it for their own selfish ends; and, inasmuch as abuses continually grow up in civic life as in all other kinds of life, the statesman is indeed a weakling who hesitates to reform these abuses because the word “reform” is often on the lips of men who are silly or dishonest.

What is true of patriotism and reform is true also of Americanism. There are plenty of scoundrels always ready to try to belittle reform movements or to bolster up existing iniquities in the name of Americanism; but this does not alter the fact that the man who can do most in this country is and must be the man whose Americanism is most sincere and intense. Outrageous though it is to use a noble idea as the cloak for evil, it is still worse to assail the noble idea itself because it can thus be used. The men who do iniquity in the name of patriotism, of reform, of Americanism, are merely one small division of the class that has always existed and will always exist,—the class of hypocrites and demagogues, the class that is always prompt to steal the watchwords of righteousness and use them in the interests of evil-doing. . . .

But we must never let our contempt for these men blind us to the nobility of the idea which they strive to degrade.

We Americans have many grave problems to solve, many threatening evils to fight, and many deeds to do, if, as we hope and believe, we have the wisdom, the strength, the courage, and the virtue to do them. But we must face facts as they are. We must neither surrender ourselves to a foolish optimism, nor succumb to a timid and ignoble pessimism. Our nation is that one among all the nations of the earth which holds in its hands the fate of the coming years. We enjoy exceptional advantages, and are menaced by exceptional dangers; and all signs indicate that we shall either fail greatly or succeed greatly. I firmly believe that we shall succeed; but we must not foolishly blink the dangers by which we are threatened, for that is the way to fail. On the contrary, we must soberly set to work to find out all we can about the existence and extent of every evil, must acknowledge it to be such, and must then attack it with unyielding resolution. There are many such evils, and each must be fought after a fashion; yet there is one quality which we must bring to the solution of every problem,—that is, an intense and fervid Americanism. We shall never be successful over the dangers that confront us; we shall never achieve true greatness, nor reach the lofty ideal which the founders and preservers of our mighty Federal Republic have set before us, unless we are Americans in heart and soul, in spirit and purpose, keenly alive to the responsibility implied in the very name of American, and proud beyond measure of the glorious privilege of bearing it. There are two or three sides to the question of Americanism, and two or three senses in which the word “Americanism” can be used

① to express the antithesis of what is unwholesome and undesirable. In the first place we wish to be broadly American and national, as opposed to being local or sectional. We do not wish, in politics, in literature, or in art, to develop that unwholesome parochial spirit, that over-exaltation of the little community at the expense of the great nation, which produces what has been described as the patriotism of the village, the patriotism of the belfry. . . . Indeed, there is, all through our life, very much less of this parochial spirit than there was formerly. Still there is an occasional outcropping here and there; and it is just as well that we should keep steadily in mind the futility of talking of a Northern literature or a Southern literature, an Eastern or a Western school of art or science. Joel Chandler Harris is emphatically a national writer; so is Mark Twain. They do not write merely for Georgia or Missouri or California any more than for Illinois or Connecticut; they write as Americans and for all people who can read English. St. Gaudens lives in New York; but his work is just as distinctive of Boston or Chicago. It is of very great consequence that we should have a full and ripe literary development in the United States, but it is not of the least consequence whether New York, or Boston, or Chicago, or San Francisco becomes the literary or artistic centre of the United States.

② There is a second side to this question of a broad Americanism, however. The patriotism of the village or the belfry is bad, but the lack of all patriotism is even worse. There are philosophers who assure us that, in the future, patriotism will be regarded not as a virtue at all, but merely as a mental stage in the journey toward a state of feeling when our patriotism will include the whole human race and all the world. This may be so; but the age of which these philosophers speak is still several aeons distant. In fact, philosophers of this type are so very advanced that they are of no practical service to the present generation. It may be, that in ages so remote that we cannot now understand any of the feelings of those who will dwell in them, patriotism will no longer be regarded as a virtue, exactly as it may be that in those remote ages people will look down upon and disregard monogamic marriage; but as things now are and have been for two or three thousand years past, and are likely to be for two or three thousand years to come, the words “home” and “country” mean a great deal. Nor do they show any tendency to lose their significance. At present, treason, like adultery, ranks as one of the worst of all possible crimes.

One may fall very far short of treason and yet be an undesirable citizen in the community. The man who becomes Europeanized, who loses his power of doing good work on this side of the water, and who loses his love for his native land, is not a traitor; but he is a silly and undesirable citizen. He is as emphatically a noxious element in our body politic as is the man who comes here from abroad and remains a foreigner. Nothing will more quickly or more surely

disqualify a man from doing good work in the world than the acquirement of that flaccid habit of mind which its possessors style cosmopolitanism.

It is not only necessary to Americanize the immigrants of foreign birth who settle among us, but it is even more necessary for those among us who are by birth and descent already Americans not to throw away our birthright, and, with incredible and contemptible folly, wander back to bow down before the alien gods whom our forefathers forsook. . . .

It is because certain classes of our people still retain their spirit of colonial dependence on, and exaggerated deference to, European opinion, that they fail to accomplish what they ought to.

It is precisely along the lines where we have worked most independently that we have accomplished the greatest results; and it is in those professions where there has been no servility to, but merely a wise profiting by foreign experience, that we have produced our greatest men. Our soldiers and statesmen and orators; our explorers, our wilderness-winners, and commonwealth-builders; the men who have made our laws and seen that they were executed; and the other men whose energy and ingenuity have created our marvelous material prosperity—all these have been men who have drawn wisdom from the experience of every age and nation, but who have nevertheless thought, and worked, and conquered, and lived, and died, purely as Americans; and on the whole they have done better work than has been done in any other country during the short period of our national life.

On the other hand, it is in those professions where our people have striven hardest to mold themselves in conventional European forms that they have succeeded least; and this holds true to the present day, the failure being of course most conspicuous where the man takes up his abode in Europe; where he becomes a second-rate European, because he is over-civilized, over-sensitive, over-refined, and has lost the hardihood and manly courage by which alone he can conquer in the keen struggle of our national life. Be it remembered, too, that this same being does not really become a European; he only ceases being an American, and becomes nothing. . . .

③ The third sense in which the word "Americanism" may be employed is with reference to the Americanizing of the newcomers to our shores. We must Americanize them in every way, in speech, in political ideas and principles, and in their way of looking at the relations between Church and State. We welcome the German or the Irishman who becomes an American. We have no use for the German or Irishman who remains such. We do not wish German-Americans and Irish-Americans who figure as such in our social and political life; we want only Americans, and, provided they are such, we do not care whether they are of native or of Irish or of German ancestry. We have no room in any healthy

American community for a German-American vote or an Irish-American vote, and it is contemptible demagoguery to put planks into any party platform with the purpose of catching such a vote. We have no room for any people who do not act and vote simply as Americans, and as nothing else. Moreover, we have as little use for people who carry religious prejudices into our politics as for those who carry prejudices of caste or nationality. We stand unalterably in favor of the public-school system in its entirety. We believe that English, and no other language, is that in which all the school exercises should be conducted. We are against any division of the school fund, and against any appropriation of public money for sectarian purposes. We are against any recognition whatever by the State in any shape or form of State-aided parochial schools. But we are equally opposed to any discrimination against or for a man because of his creed. We demand that all citizens, Protestant and Catholic, Jew and Gentile, shall have fair treatment in every way; that all alike shall have their rights guaranteed them. The very reasons that make us unqualified in our opposition to State-aided sectarian schools make us equally bent that, in the management of our public schools, the adherents of each creed shall be given exact and equal justice, wholly without regard to their religious affiliations; that trustees, superintendents, teachers, scholars, all alike shall be treated without any reference whatsoever to the creed they profess. We maintain that it is an outrage, in voting for a man for any position, whether State or national, to take into account his religious faith, provided only he is a good American. . . .

The mighty tide of immigration to our shores has brought in its train much of good and much of evil; and whether the good or the evil shall predominate depends mainly on whether these newcomers do or do not throw themselves heartily into our national life, cease to be Europeans, and become Americans like the rest of us. More than a third of the people of the Northern States are of foreign birth or parentage. An immense number of them have become completely Americanized, and these stand on exactly the same plane as the descendants of any Puritan, Cavalier, or Knickerbocker among us, and do their full and honorable share of the nation's work. But where immigrants, or the sons of immigrants, do not heartily and in good faith throw in their lot with us, but cling to the speech, the customs, the ways of life, and the habits of thought of the Old World which they have left, they thereby harm both themselves and us. If they remain alien elements, unassimilated, and with interests separate from ours, they are mere obstructions to the current of our national life, and, moreover, can get no good from it themselves. In fact, though we ourselves also suffer from their perversity, it is they who really suffer most. It is an immense benefit to the European immigrant to change him

into an American citizen. To bear the name of American is to bear the most honorable titles; and whoever does not so believe has no business to bear the name at all, and, if he comes from Europe, the sooner he goes back there the better. . . . We freely extend the hand of welcome and of good-fellowship to every man, no matter what his creed or birthplace, who comes here honestly intent on becoming a good United States citizen like the rest of us; but we have a right, and it is our duty, to demand that he shall indeed become so and shall not confuse the issues with which we are struggling by introducing among us Old-World quarrels and prejudices. . . . But I wish to be distinctly understood on one point.

Americanism is a question of spirit, conviction, and purpose, not of creed or birthplace. The politician who bids for the Irish or German vote, or the Irishman or German who votes as an Irishman or German, is despicable, for all citizens of this commonwealth should vote solely as Americans; but he is not a whit less despicable than the voter who votes against a good American, merely because that American happens to have been born in Ireland or Germany. Know-nothingism, in any form, is as utterly un-American as foreignism. It is a base outrage to oppose a man because of his religion or birthplace, and all good citizens will hold any such effort in abhorrence. A Scandinavian, a German, or an Irishman who has really become an American has the right to stand on exactly the same footing as any native-born citizen in the land, and is just as much entitled to the friendship and support, social and political, of his neighbors. . . .

We Americans can only do our allotted task well if we face it steadily and bravely, seeing but not fearing the dangers. Above all we must stand shoulder to shoulder, not asking as to the ancestry or creed of our comrades, but only demanding that they be in very truth Americans, and that we all work together, heart, hand, and head, for the honor and the greatness of our common country.

America the Beautiful

WORDS BY KATHARINE LEE BATES

This popular and eminently singable song was written by Katharine Lee Bates (1859–1929), an English professor at Wellesley College. The poem, originally called “Pikes Peak,” was inspired by the sights Bates had seen on a train ride to and from Colorado Springs, especially by the vista she beheld from the top of Pikes Peak. As she explained, “Near the top we had to leave the wagon and go the rest of the way on mules. I was very tired. But when I saw the view, I felt great joy. All the wonder of America seemed displayed there, with the sea-like expanse.” Bates’s poem, published on July 4, 1895, was eventually combined with music written by church organist and choir-master Samuel A. Ward (1847–1903), becoming popular around 1910. Like the other patriotic songs, “America the Beautiful” is mostly known by its first stanza, which begins by celebrating America’s natural gifts and ends with a plea (or is it a prayer?) for brotherhood. What do the other stanzas celebrate, and what do they call for? How would you summarize the teaching and ideals of this poem? How does singing this song make you feel?

O beautiful for spacious skies,
For amber waves of grain,
For purple mountain majesties
Above the fruited plain!
America! America!
God shed His grace on thee,
And crown thy good with brotherhood
From sea to shining sea!

O beautiful for pilgrim feet
Whose stern impassion'd stress
A thoroughfare of freedom beat
Across the wilderness.
America! America!
God mend thine every flaw,
Confirm thy soul in self-control,
Thy liberty in law.

O beautiful for heroes prov'd
In liberating strife,
Who more than self their country loved
And mercy more than life.
America! America!
May God thy gold refine
Till all success be nobleness
And ev'ry gain divine.

O beautiful for patriot dream
That sees beyond the years
Thine alabaster cities gleam
Undimmed by human tears.
America! America!
God shed His grace on thee
And crown thy good with brotherhood
From sea to shining sea.

God Bless America

IRVING BERLIN

Composer and lyricist Irving Berlin, born Israel Baline (1888–1989), immigrated with his family to the United States in 1893 to escape the pogroms against the Jews in his native Russia. In 1918, while serving in the Army, Berlin wrote “God Bless America,” taking its title from the phrase his mother often used to indicate that “without America, her family would have had no place to go.” In 1938, around the twentieth anniversary of the end of World War I, the popular singer Kate Smith asked Berlin for a song. Concerned about the war clouds gathering in Europe, he tried writing a few songs about the United States, but then remembered this one, which had sat in a drawer for twenty years. Berlin revised the song and Smith introduced it on her Armistice Day 1938 radio broadcast. On September 11, 2001, following the terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon, this was the song that members of the House of Representatives solemnly sang on the steps of the Capitol.*

The introduction speaks of allegiance, gratitude, and prayer: what exactly is their connection, one to another? The song is said to be a prayer: for what exactly do we pray? Is this a song only for times of crisis? How does singing this song make you feel?

(Spoken Introduction)

While the storm clouds gather
Far across the sea,
Let us swear allegiance

To a land that’s free;
Let us all be grateful
For a land so fair,
As we raise our voices
In a solemn prayer.

(Song)

God bless America,
Land that I love,
Stand beside her and guide her
Through the night with a light from above.
From the mountains, to the prairies,
To the oceans white with foam.
God bless America,
My home sweet home.
God bless America,
My home sweet home.

* Berlin also provided the spoken introduction to the song, which Smith used regularly but which is rarely heard now.

I AM HAPPY TO JOIN WITH YOU TODAY IN WHAT WILL GO DOWN IN HISTORY as the greatest demonstration for freedom in the history of our nation.

Fivescore years ago, a great American, in whose symbolic shadow we stand today, signed the Emancipation Proclamation. This momentous decree came as a great beacon light of hope to millions of Negro slaves who had been seared in the flames of withering injustice. It came as a joyous daybreak to end the long night of their captivity.

But one hundred years later, the Negro still is not free; one hundred years later, the life of the Negro is still sadly crippled by the manacles of segregation and the chains of discrimination; one hundred years later, the Negro lives on a lonely island of poverty in the midst of a vast ocean of material prosperity; one hundred years later, the Negro is still languished in the corners of American society and finds himself in exile in his own land.

So we've come here today to dramatize a shameful condition. In a sense we've come to our nation's capital to cash a check. When the architects of our republic wrote the magnificent words of the Constitution and the Declaration of Independence, they were signing a promissory note to which every American was to fall heir. This note was the promise that all men, yes, black men as well as white men, would be guaranteed the unalienable rights of life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.

It is obvious today that America has defaulted on this promissory note in so far as her citizens of color are concerned. Instead of honoring this sacred obligation, America has given the Negro people a bad check; a check which has come back marked "insufficient funds." We refuse to believe that there are insufficient funds in the great vaults of opportunity of this nation. And so we've come to cash this check, a check that will give us upon demand the riches of freedom and the security of justice.

We have also come to this hallowed spot to remind America of the fierce urgency of now. This is no time to engage in the luxury of cooling off or to take the tranquilizing drug of gradualism. Now is the time to make real the promises of democracy; now is the time to rise from the dark and desolate valley of segregation to the sunlit path of racial justice; now is the time to lift our nation from the quicksands of racial injustice to the solid rock of brotherhood; now is the time to make justice a reality for all God's children. It would be fatal for the nation to overlook the urgency of the moment. This sweltering summer of the Negro's legitimate discontent will not pass until there is an invigorating autumn of freedom and equality.

Nineteen sixty-three is not an end, but a beginning. And those who hope that the Negro needed to blow off steam and will now be content, will have a rude awakening if the nation returns to business as usual.

There will be neither rest nor tranquility in America until the Negro is granted his citizenship rights. The whirlwinds of revolt will continue to shake the foundations of our nation until the bright day of justice emerges.

But there is something that I must say to my people who stand on the warm threshold which leads into the palace of justice. In the process of gaining our rightful place we must not be guilty of wrongful deeds.

Let us not seek to satisfy our thirst for freedom by drinking from the cup of bitterness and hatred. We must forever conduct our struggle on the high plane of dignity and discipline. We must not allow our creative protest to degenerate into physical violence. Again and again we must rise to the majestic heights of meeting physical force with soul force.

The marvelous new militancy which has engulfed the Negro community must not lead us to a distrust of all white people, for many of our white brothers, as evidenced by their presence here today, have come to realize that their destiny is tied up with our destiny and they have come to realize that their freedom is inextricably bound to our freedom. This offense we share mounted to storm the battlements of injustice must be carried forth by a biracial army. We cannot walk alone.

And as we walk, we must make the pledge that we shall always march ahead. We cannot turn back. There are those who are asking

the devotees of civil rights, “When will you be satisfied?” We can never be satisfied as long as the Negro is the victim of the unspeakable horrors of police brutality.

We can never be satisfied as long as our bodies, heavy with fatigue of travel, cannot gain lodging in the motels of the highways and the hotels of the cities. We cannot be satisfied as long as the Negro’s basic mobility is from a smaller ghetto to a larger one.

We can never be satisfied as long as our children are stripped of their selfhood and robbed of their dignity by signs stating “for whites only.” We cannot be satisfied as long as a Negro in Mississippi cannot vote and a Negro in New York believes he has nothing for which to vote. No, we are not satisfied, and we will not be satisfied until justice rolls down like waters and righteousness like a mighty stream.

I am not unmindful that some of you come here out of excessive trials and tribulation. Some of you have come fresh from narrow jail cells. Some of you have come from areas where your quest for freedom left you battered by the storms of persecution and staggered by the winds of police brutality. You have been the veterans of creative suffering. Continue to work with the faith that unearned suffering is redemptive.

Go back to Mississippi; go back to Alabama; go back to South Carolina; go back to Georgia; go back to Louisiana; go back to the slums and ghettos of the northern cities, knowing that somehow this situation can, and will be changed. Let us not wallow in the valley of despair.

So I say to you, my friends, that even though we must face the difficulties of today and tomorrow, I still have a dream. It is a dream deeply rooted in the American dream that one day this nation will rise up and live out the true meaning of its creed—we hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal.

I have a dream that one day on the red hills of Georgia, sons of former slaves and sons of former slave-owners will be able to sit down together at the table of brotherhood.

I have a dream that one day, even the state of Mississippi, a state sweltering with the heat of injustice, sweltering with the heat of oppression, will be transformed into an oasis of freedom and justice.

I have a dream my four little children will one day live in a nation where they will not be judged by the color of their skin but by the content of their character. I have a dream today!

I have a dream that one day, down in Alabama, with its vicious racists, with its governor having his lips dripping with the words of interposition and nullification, that one day, right there in Alabama, little black boys and black girls will be able to join hands with little white boys and white girls as sisters and brothers. I have a dream today!

I have a dream that one day every valley shall be exalted, every hill and mountain shall be made low, the rough places shall be made plain, and the crooked places shall be made straight and the glory of the Lord will be revealed and all flesh shall see it together.

This is our hope. This is the faith that I go back to the South with.

With this faith we will be able to hew out of the mountain of despair a stone of hope. With this faith we will be able to transform the jangling discords of our nation into a beautiful symphony of brotherhood.

With this faith we will be able to work together, to pray together, to struggle together, to go to jail together, to stand up for freedom together, knowing that we will be free one day. This will be the day when all of God’s children will be able to sing with new meaning—“my country ’tis of thee; sweet land of liberty; of thee I sing; land where my fathers died, land of the pilgrim’s pride; from every mountain side, let freedom ring”—and if America is to be a great nation, this must become true.

So let freedom ring from the prodigious hilltops of New Hampshire.

Let freedom ring from the mighty mountains of New York.

Let freedom ring from the heightening Alleghenies of Pennsylvania.

Let freedom ring from the snow-capped Rockies of Colorado.

Let freedom ring from the curvaceous slopes of California.

But not only that.

Let freedom ring from Stone Mountain of Georgia.

Let freedom ring from Lookout Mountain of Tennessee.

Let freedom ring from every hill and molehill of Mississippi, from every mountainside, let freedom ring.

And when we allow freedom to ring, when we let it ring from every village and hamlet, from every state and city, we will be able to speed up that day when all of God’s children—black men and white men, Jews and Gentiles, Catholics and Protestants—will be able to join hands and to sing in the words of the old Negro spiritual, “Free at last, free at last; thank God Almighty, we are free at last.”

Full Transcript: President Trump's July 4, 2020 Speech at Mount Rushmore



Donald Trump at Mount Rushmore

Full text of President Donald Trump's speech at the July 4th, 2020 Mount Rushmore event. This event occurred on July 3, 2020.

TRANSCRIPT:**Donald Trump – President of the United States of America**

Well, thank you very much. Governor Noem, Secretary Bernhardt, we very much appreciate it. Members of Congress, distinguished guests, and a very special hello to South Dakota.

As we begin this 4th of July weekend, the First Lady and I would wish each and every one of you a very, very Happy Independence Day. Thank you.

Let us show our appreciation to the South Dakota Army and Air National Guard and the Air Force for inspiring us with that magnificent display of American air power, and of course, our gratitude as always to the legendary and very talented Blue Angels. Thank you very much.

Let us also send our deepest thanks to our wonderful veterans, law enforcement, first responders, and the doctors, nurses, and scientists working tirelessly to kill the virus. They are working hard. I want to thank them very, very much.

We're grateful as well to your state's congressional delegation, Senator John Thune. John, thank you very much. Senator Mike Rounds. Thank you, Mike. And Dusty Johnson, Congressman. Hi, Dusty. Thank you.

And all others with us tonight from Congress, thank you very much for coming. We appreciate it.

There could be no better place to celebrate America's independence than beneath this magnificent, incredible majestic mountain monument to the greatest Americans who have ever lived.

Today we pay tribute to the exceptional lives and extraordinary legacies of George Washington, Thomas Jefferson, Abraham Lincoln, and Teddy Roosevelt.

I am here as your president to proclaim before the country and before the world, this monument will never be desecrated. These heroes will never be defamed. Their legacy will never ever be destroyed. Their achievements will never be forgotten, and Mount Rushmore will stand forever as an eternal tribute to our forefathers and to our freedom.

We gather tonight to herald the most important day in the history of nations, July 4th, 1776. At those words, every American heart should swell with pride, every American family should cheer with delight, and every American patriot should be filled with joy. Because each of you lives in the most magnificent country in the history of the world and it will soon be greater than ever before.

Our founders launched not only a revolution in government, but a revolution in the pursuit of justice, equality, liberty, and prosperity. No nation has done more to advance the human condition than the United States of America. And no people have done more to promote human progress than the citizens of our great nation.

It was all made possible by the courage of 56 patriots who gathered in Philadelphia 244 years ago and signed the **Declaration of Independence**. They enshrined a divine truth that changed the world forever when they said, "**All men are created equal.**" These immortal words set in motion the unstoppable march of freedom.

Our founders boldly declared that we are all endowed with the same divine rights, given us by our Creator in Heaven, and that which God has given us, we will allow no one ever to take away ever.

1776 represented the culmination of thousands of years of Western civilization and the triumph of not only spirit, but of wisdom, philosophy, and reason. And yet, as we meet here tonight, there is a growing danger that threatens every blessing our ancestors fought so hard for, struggled, they bled to secure.

Our nation is witnessing a merciless campaign to wipe out our history, defame our heroes, erase our values, and indoctrinate our

children.

Angry mobs are trying to tear down statues of our founders, deface our most sacred memorials, and unleash a wave of violent crime in our cities. Many of these people have no idea why they're doing this, but some know exactly what they are doing.

They think the American people are weak and soft and submissive. But no, the American people are strong and proud and they will not allow our country and all of its values, history, and culture to be taken from them.

One of their political weapons is cancel culture, driving people from their jobs, shaming dissenters, and demanding total submission from anyone who disagrees. This is the very definition of totalitarianism, and it is completely alien to our culture and to our values and it has absolutely no place in the United States of America.

This attack on our liberty, our magnificent liberty must be stopped and it will be stopped very quickly. We will expose this dangerous movement, protect our nation's children, end this radical assault, and preserve our beloved American way of life.

In our schools, our newsrooms, even our corporate boardrooms, there is a new far-left fascism that demands absolute allegiance. If you do not speak its language, perform its rituals, recite its mantras, and follow its commandments, then you will be censored, banished, blacklisted, persecuted, and punished. It's not going to happen to us.

Make no mistake. This left-wing cultural revolution is designed to overthrow the American Revolution. In so doing they would destroy the very civilization that rescued billions from poverty, disease, violence, and hunger, and that lifted humanity to new heights of achievement, discovery, and progress.

To make this possible, they are determined to tear down every statue, symbol, and memory of our national heritage.

[Not on my watch.]

True. That's very true actually. That is why I am deploying federal law enforcement to protect our monuments, arrest the rioters, and prosecute offenders to the fullest extent of the law.

[Four more years! Four more years! Four more years!]

Thank you.

I am pleased to report that yesterday, federal agents arrested the suspected ringleader of the attack on the statue of the great Andrew Jackson in Washington, D.C., and in addition, hundreds more have been arrested.

Under the executive order I signed last week pertaining to the Veterans Memorial Preservation Memorial and Recognition Act and other laws, people who damage or deface federal statues or monuments will get a minimum of 10 years in prison and obviously that includes our beautiful Mount Rushmore.

Our people have a great memory. They will never forget the destruction of statues and monuments to George Washington, Abraham Lincoln, Ulysses S. Grant, abolitionists and many others. The violent mayhem we have seen in the streets and cities that are run by liberal Democrats in every case is the predictable result of years of extreme indoctrination and bias in education, journalism, and other cultural institutions.

Against every law of society and nature, our children are taught in school to hate their own country and to believe that the men and women who built it were not heroes but that were villains.

The radical view of American history is a web of lies, all perspective is removed, every virtue is obscured, every motive is twisted, every fact is distorted and every flaw is magnified until the history is purged and the record is disfigured beyond all recognition.

This movement is openly attacking the legacies of every person on Mount Rushmore. They defiled the memory of Washington, Jefferson, Lincoln and Roosevelt. Today we will set history and history's record straight.

Before these figures were immortalized in stone, they were American giants in full flesh and blood, gallant men, whose intrepid deeds unleashed the greatest leap of human advancement the world has ever known.

Tonight I will tell you and most importantly the youth of our nation the true stories of these great, great men.

From head to toe, George Washington represented the strength, grace, and dignity of the American people. From a small volunteer force of citizen farmers, he created the Continental Army out of nothing and rallied them to stand against the most powerful military on earth.

Through eight long years, through the brutal winter at Valley Forge, through setback after setback on the field of battle, he led those patriots to ultimate triumph. When the army had dwindled to a few thousand men at Christmas of 1776, when defeat seemed absolutely certain, he took what remained of his forces on a daring nighttime crossing of the Delaware River.

They marched through nine miles of frigid darkness, many without boots on their feet, leaving a trail of blood in the snow. In the morning, they seized victory at Trenton after forcing the surrender of the most powerful empire on the planet at Yorktown, General Washington did not claim power but simply returned to Mount Vernon as a private citizen.

When called upon again, he presided over the Constitutional Convention in Philadelphia and was unanimously elected our first president.

When he stepped down after two terms, his former adversary, King George called him the greatest man of the age. He remains first in

our hearts to this day, for as long as Americans love this land, we will honor and cherish the father of our country, George Washington.

He will never be removed, abolished, and most of all, he will never be forgotten.

Thomas Jefferson, the great Thomas Jefferson, was 33 years old when he traveled north to Pennsylvania and brilliantly authored one of the greatest treasures of human history, **the Declaration of Independence**. He also drafted Virginia's constitution and conceived and wrote the Virginia Statute for Religious Freedom, a model for our cherished First Amendment.

After serving as the first Secretary of State, and then Vice President, he was elected to the presidency. He ordered American warriors to crush Barbary pirates. He doubled the size of our nation with the Louisiana Purchase and he sent the famous explorers Lewis and Clark into the west on a daring expedition to the Pacific Ocean.

He was an architect, an inventor, a diplomat, a scholar, the founder of one of the world's great universities and an ardent defender of liberty. Americans will forever admire the author of American freedom, Thomas Jefferson, and he too will never, ever be abandoned by us.

Abraham Lincoln, the savior of our union, was a self-taught country lawyer who grew up in a log cabin on the American frontier. The first Republican president, he rose to high office from obscurity based on a force and clarity of his anti-slavery convictions. Very, very strong convictions.

He signed the law that built the **Trans-Continental Railroad**. He signed the **Homestead Act** given to some incredible scholars as simply defined ordinary citizens free land to settle anywhere in the American West, and he led the country through the darkest hours of American history, giving every ounce of strength that he had to ensure that *government of the people, by the people and for the people* did not perish from this earth.

He served as commander in chief of the U.S. Armed Forces during our bloodiest war, the struggle that saved our union and extinguished the evil of slavery. Over 600,000 died in that war, more than 20,000 were killed or wounded in a single day in Antietam.

At Gettysburg 157 years ago, the Union bravely withstood an assault of nearly 15,000 men and threw back Pickett's Charge. Lincoln won the Civil War. He issued the **Emancipation Proclamation**. He led the passage of the 13th Amendment, abolishing slavery for all-time and ultimately his determination to preserve our nation and our union cost him his life.

For as long as we live, Americans will uphold and revere the immortal memory of President Abraham Lincoln.

Theodore Roosevelt exemplified the unbridled confidence of our national culture and identity. He saw the towering grandeur of America's mission in the world and he pursued it with overwhelming energy and zeal.

As a Lieutenant Colonel during the Spanish-American War, he led the famous Rough Riders to defeat the enemy at San Juan Hill. He cleaned up corruption as **police commissioner** of New York City, then served as the Governor of New York, Vice President, and at 42 years old, became the youngest ever President of the United States.

He sent our great new naval fleet around the globe to announce America's arrival as a world power. He gave us many of our national parks, including the Grand Canyon. He oversaw the construction of the awe-inspiring Panama Canal and he is the only person ever awarded both the Nobel Peace Prize and the Congressional Medal of Honor.

He was American freedom personified in full. The American people will never relinquish the bold, beautiful and untamed spirit of

Theodore Roosevelt.

No movement that seeks to dismantle these treasured American legacies can possibly have a love of America at its heart. Can't happen. No person who remains quiet at the destruction of this resplendent heritage can possibly lead us to a better future.

The radical ideology attacking our country advances under the banner of social justice, but in truth, it would demolish both justice and society. It would transform justice into an instrument of division and vengeance and it would turn our free and inclusive society into a place of a repression, domination, and exclusion. They want to silence us, but we will not be silenced.

Thank you. Thank you very much. Thank you very much.

We will state the truth in full without apology. We declare that the United States of America is the most just and exceptional nation ever to exist on earth.

We are proud of the fact that our country was founded on **Judeo-Christian principles** and we understand that these values have dramatically advanced the cause of peace and justice throughout the world.

We know that the American family is the bedrock of American life. We recognize the solemn right and moral duty of every nation to secure its borders and we are building the wall.

We remember that governments exist to protect the safety and happiness of their own people. A nation must care for its own citizens first. We must take care of America first. It's time. We believe in equal opportunity, equal justice, and equal treatment for citizens of every race, background, religion and creed.

Every child of every color, born and unborn, is made in the holy image of God.

We want free and open debate, not speech codes and cancel culture. We embrace tolerance, not prejudice. We support the courageous men and women of law enforcement. We will never abolish our police or our great Second Amendment which gives us the right to keep and bear arms.

We believe that our children should be taught to love their country, honor their history, and respect our great American flag.

We stand tall, we stand proud, and we only kneel to Almighty God. This is who we are. This is what we believe and these are the values that will guide us as we strive to build an even better and greater future.

Those who seek to erase our heritage want Americans to forget our pride and our great dignity so that we can no longer understand ourselves or America's destiny. In toppling the heroes of 1776, they seek to dissolve the bonds of love and loyalty that we feel for our country and that we feel for each other. Their goal is not a better America, their goal is to end America.

In its place, they want power for themselves, but just as patriots did in centuries past, the American people will stand in their way and we will win and win quickly and with great dignity. We will never let them rip America's heroes from our monuments or from our hearts.

By tearing down Washington and Jefferson, these radicals would tear down the very heritage for which men gave their lives to win the Civil War. They would erase the memory that inspired those soldiers to go to their deaths, singing these words of the Battle Hymn of the Republic, *"As he died to make men holy, let us die to make men free, while God is marching on."*

They would tear down the principles that propelled the abolition of slavery and ultimately around the world ending an evil institution that had plagued humanity for thousands and thousands of years.

Our opponents would tear apart the very documents that Martin Luther King used to express his dream and the ideas that were the foundation of the righteous movement for Civil Rights. They would

tear down the beliefs, culture and identity, that have made America the most vibrant and tolerant society in the history of the earth.

My fellow Americans, it is time to speak up loudly and strongly and powerfully and defend the integrity of our country.

It is time for our politicians to summon the bravery and determination of our American ancestors. It is time.

It is time to plant our flag and to protect the greatest of this nation for citizens of every race in every city in every part of this glorious land.

For the sake of our honor, for the sake of our children, for the sake of our union, we must protect and preserve our history, our heritage, and our great heroes.

Here tonight before the eyes of our forefathers, Americans declare again, as we did 244 years ago, that we will not be tyrannized, we will not be demeaned, and we will not be intimidated by bad, evil people. It will not happen.

We will proclaim the ideals of the Declaration of Independence and we will never surrender the spirit and the courage and the cause of July 4, 1776. Upon this ground, we will stand firm and unwavering. In the face of lies meant to divide us, demoralize us and diminish us.

We will show that the story of America unites us, inspires us, includes us all, and makes everyone free. We must demand that our children are taught once again to see America as did Reverend Martin Luther King when he said that the founders had signed a promissory note to every future generation. Dr. King saw that the mission of justice required us to fully embrace our founding ideals. Those ideals are so important to us, the founding ideals.

He called on his fellow citizens not to rip down their heritage, but to live up to their heritage. Above all, our children from every community must be taught that to be American is to inherit the spirit of the most adventurous and confident people ever to walk the face of the Earth.

Americans are the people who pursued our Manifest Destiny across the ocean, into the uncharted wilderness, over the tallest mountains, and then into the skies, and even into the stars.

We are the country of Andrew Jackson, Ulysses S. Grant, and Frederick Douglas. We are the land of Wild Bill Hickock and Buffalo Bill Cody.

We are the nation that gave rise to the Wright Brothers, the Tuskegee airmen, Harriet Tubman, Clara Barton, Jesse Owens, George Patton, General George Patton, the great Louis Armstrong, Alan Shepard, Elvis Presley, and Muhammad Ali, and only America could have produced them all. No other place.

We are the culture that put up the Hoover Dam, laid down the highways, and sculpted the skyline of Manhattan. We are the people who dreamed the spectacular dream, it was called Las Vegas in the Nevada desert, who built up Miami from the Florida marsh, and who carved our heroes into the face of Mount Rushmore.

Americans harnessed electricity, split the atom, and gave the world the telephone and the internet. We settled the Wild West, won two World Wars, landed American astronauts on the moon. And one day very soon, we will plant our flag on Mars.

We gave the world the poetry of Walt Whitman, the stories of Mark Twain, the songs of Irving Berlin, the voice of Ella Fitzgerald, the style of Frank Sinatra, the comedy of Bob Hope, the power of the Saturn V rocket, the toughness of the Ford F150, and the awesome might of the American aircraft carriers.

Americans must never lose sight of this miraculous story. We should never lose sight of it. Nobody has ever done it like we have done it.

So today, under the authority vested in me as President of the United States, I am announcing the creation of a new monument to the giants of our past. I am signing an executive order to establish the National Guard of American heroes, a vast outdoor park that will feature the statues of the greatest Americans to ever live.

From this night, and from this magnificent place, let us go forward united in our purpose and rededicated in our resolve. We will raise the next generation of American patriots. We will write the next thrilling chapter of the American adventure.

And we will teach our children to know that they live in a land of legends, that nothing can stop them, and that no one can hold them down. They will know that, in America, you can do anything, you can be anything, and together, we can achieve anything.

Uplifted by the titans of Mount Rushmore, we will find unity that no one expected. We will make strides that no one thought possible. This country will be everything that our citizens have hoped for, for so many years, and that our enemies fear, because we will never forget that the American freedom exists for American greatness.

And that's what we have, American greatness.

Centuries from now, our legacy will be the cities we built, the champions we forged, the good that we did, and the monuments we created to inspire us all.

My fellow citizens, America's destiny is in our sights. America's heroes are embedded in our hearts. America's future is in our hands. And ladies and gentlemen, the best is yet to come.

This has been a great honor for the First Lady and myself to be with you. I love your state. I love this country. I'd like to wish everybody a very happy Fourth of July to all. God bless you. God bless your families. God bless our great military, and God bless America. Thank you very much. Thank you.

Session 7

Oh I'm a Good Old Rebel

“Oh, I'm a Good Ol' Rebel”, also called “The Good Old Rebel”, is a pro-Confederate folk song and rebel song commonly attributed to Major James Innes Randolph. It was initially created by Randolph in the 1860s following the defeat of the Confederate States of America, as a poem before evolving into an oral folk song and was only published in definitive written form in 1914.

Oh, I'm a good old rebel
Now that's just what I am
And for this yankee nation
I do no give a damn
I'm glad I fought against her
I only wish we'd won
I ain't asked any pardon
For anything I've done
I hates the Yankee nation
And everything they do
I hates the declaration
Of independence too
I hates the glorious union
'Tis dripping with our blood
I hates the striped banner
And fought it all I could
I rode with Robert E. Lee
For three years there about
Got wounded in four places
And I starved at Point Lookout
I caught the rheumatism
Campin' in the snow
But I killed a chance of Yankees
And I'd like to kill some more
Three hundred thousand Yankees
Is stiff in southern dust
We got three hundred thousand
Before they conquered us
They died of southern fever
And southern steel and shot
I wish they was three million
Instead of what we got

I can't take up my musket
And fight 'em down no more
But I ain't a-goin' to love them
Now that is certain sure
And I don't want no pardon
For what I was and am
I won't be reconstructed
And I do not give a damn
Oh, I'm a good old rebel
Now that's just what I am
And for this Yankee nation
I do no give a damn
I'm glad I fought against her
I only wish we'd won
I ain't asked any pardon
For anything I've done
I ain't asked any pardon
For anything I've done...

BLACK POWER: Its Need and Substance

● “To carve out a place for itself in the politico-social order,” V. O. Key, Jr. wrote in *Politics, Parties and Pressure Groups*, “a new group may have to fight for reorientation of many of the values of the old order” (p. 57). This is especially true when that group is composed of black people in the American society—a society that has for centuries deliberately and systematically excluded them from political participation. Black people in the United States must raise hard questions, questions which challenge the very nature of the society itself: its long-standing values, beliefs and institutions.

To do this, we must first redefine ourselves. Our basic need is to reclaim our history and our identity from what

must be called cultural terrorism, from the depredation of self-justifying white guilt. We shall have to struggle for the right to create our own terms through which to define ourselves and our relationship to the society, and to have these terms recognized. This is the first necessity of a free people, and the first right that any oppressor must suspend.

In *Politics Among Nations*, Hans Morgenthau defined political power as “the psychological control over the minds of men” (p. 29). This control includes the attempt by the oppressor to have *his* definitions, *his* historical descriptions, *accepted* by the oppressed. This was true in Africa no less than in the United States. To black Africans,

the word "Uhuru" means "freedom," but they had to fight the white colonizers for the right to use the term. The recorded history of this country's dealings with red and black men offers other examples. In the wars between the white settlers and the "Indians," a battle won by the Cavalry was described as a "victory." The "Indians'" triumphs, however, were "massacres." (The American colonists were not unaware of the need to define their acts in their own terms. They labeled their fight against England a "revolution"; the English attempted to demean it by calling it "insubordination" or "riotous.")

The historical period following Reconstruction in the South after the Civil War has been called by many historians the period of Redemption, implying that the bigoted southern slave societies were "redeemed" from the hands of "reckless and irresponsible" black rulers. Professor John Hope Franklin's *Reconstruction* or Dr. W. E. B. Dubois' *Black Reconstruction* should be sufficient to dispel inaccurate historical notions, but the larger society persists in its own self-serving accounts. Thus black people came to be depicted as "lazy," "apathetic," "dumb," "shiftless," "good-timers." Just as red men had to be recorded as "savages" to justify the white man's theft of their land, so black men had to be vilified in order to justify their continued oppression. Those who have the right to define are the masters of the situation. Lewis Carroll understood this:

"When I use a word," Humpty Dumpty said in a rather scornful tone, "it means just what I choose it to mean—neither more nor less."

"The question is," said Alice, "whether you *can* make words mean so many different things."

"The question is," said Humpty Dumpty, "which is to be master—that's all." *

* Lewis Carroll, *Through the Looking Glass*. New York: Doubleday Books, Inc., p. 196.

Today, the American educational system continues to reinforce the entrenched values of the society through the use of words. Few people in this country question that this is "the land of the free and the home of the brave." They have had these words drummed into them from childhood. Few people question that this is the "Great Society" or that this country is fighting "Communist aggression" around the world. We mouth these things over and over, and they become truisms not to be questioned. In a similar way, black people have been saddled with epithets.

"Integration" is another current example of a word which has been defined according to the way white Americans see it. To many of them, it means black men wanting to marry white daughters; it means "race mixing"—implying bed or dance partners. To black people, it has meant a way to improve their lives—economically and politically. But the predominant white definition has stuck in the minds of too many people.

Black people must redefine themselves, and only *they* can do that. Throughout this country, vast segments of the black communities are beginning to recognize the need to assert their own definitions, to reclaim their history, their culture; to create their own sense of community and togetherness. There is a growing resentment of the word "Negro," for example, because this term is the invention of our oppressor; it is his image of us that he describes. Many blacks are now calling themselves African-Americans, Afro-Americans or black people because that is *our* image of ourselves. (When we begin to define our own image, the stereotypes—that is, lies—that our oppressor has developed will begin in the white community and end there. The black community will have a positive image of itself that *it* has created. This means we will no longer call ourselves lazy, apathetic, dumb, good-timers, shiftless, etc. Those are words used by white America to define us. If we accept these adjectives, as some of us have in the past, then we

see ourselves only in a negative way, precisely the way white America wants us to see ourselves. Our incentive is broken and our will to fight is surrendered. From now on we shall view ourselves as African-Americans and as black people who are in fact energetic, determined, intelligent, beautiful and peace-loving.

There is a terminology and ethos peculiar to the black community of which black people are beginning to be no longer ashamed. Black communities are the only large segments of this society where people refer to each other as brother—soul-brother; soul-sister. Some people may look upon this as *ersatz*, as make-believe, but it is not that. It is real. It is a growing sense of community. It is a growing realization that black Americans have a common bond not only among themselves, but with their African brothers. In *Black Man's Burden*, John O. Killens described his trip to ten African countries as follows:

Everywhere I went people called me brother. . . . "Welcome, American brother." It was a good feeling for me, to be in Africa. To walk in a land for the first time in your entire life knowing within yourself that your color would not be held against you. No black man ever knows this in America [p. 160].

More and more black Americans are developing this feeling. They are becoming aware that they have a history which pre-dates their forced introduction to this country. African-American history means a long history beginning on the continent of Africa, a history not taught in the standard textbooks of this country. It is absolutely essential that black people know this history, that they know their roots, that they develop an awareness of their cultural heritage. Too long have they been kept in submission by being told that they had no culture, no manifest heritage, before they landed on the slave auction blocks in this country. If black people are to know themselves as a

vibrant, valiant people, they must know their roots. And they will soon learn that the Hollywood image of man-eating cannibals waiting for, and waiting on, the Great White Hunter is a lie.

With redefinition will come a clearer notion of the role black Americans can play in this world. This role will emerge clearly out of the unique, common experiences of Afro-Asians. Killens concludes:

I believe furthermore that the American Negro can be the bridge between the West and Africa-Asia. We black Americans can serve as a bridge to mutual understanding. The one thing we black Americans have in common with the other colored peoples of the world is that we have all felt the cruel and ruthless heel of white supremacy. We have all been "niggerized" on one level or another. And all of us are determined to "deniggerize" the earth. To rid the world of "niggers" is the Black Man's Burden, human reconstruction is the grand objective [p. 176].

Only when black people fully develop this sense of community, of themselves, can they begin to deal effectively with the problems of racism in *this* country. This is what we mean by a new consciousness; this is the vital first step.

The next step is what we shall call the process of political modernization—a process which must take place if the society is to be rid of racism. "Political modernization" includes many things, but we mean by it three major concepts: (1) questioning old values and institutions of the society; (2) searching for new and different forms of political structure to solve political and economic problems; and (3) broadening the base of political participation to include more people in the decision-making process. These notions (we shall take up each in turn) are central to our thinking throughout this book and to contemporary American history as a whole. As David Apter wrote in

The Politics of Modernization, “. . . the struggle to modernize is what has given meaning to our generation. It tests our cherished institutions and our beliefs. . . . So compelling a force has it become that we are forced to ask new questions of our own institutions. Each country, whether modernized or modernizing, stands in both judgment and fear of the results. Our own society is no exception” (p. 2).

The values of this society support a racist system; we find it incongruous to ask black people to adopt and support most of those values. We also reject the assumption that the basic institutions of this society must be preserved. The goal of black people must not be to assimilate into middle-class America, for that class—as a whole—is without a viable conscience as regards humanity. The values of the middle class permit the perpetuation of the ravages of the black community. The values of that class are based on material aggrandizement, not the expansion of humanity. The values of that class ultimately support cloistered little closed societies tucked away neatly in tree-lined suburbia. The values of that class do not lead to the creation of an open society. That class mouths its preference for a free, competitive society, while at the same time forcefully and even viciously denying to black people as a group the opportunity to compete.

We are not unmindful of other descriptions of the social utility of the middle class. Banfield and Wilson, in *City Politics*, concluded:

The departure of the middle class from the central city is important in other ways. . . . The middle class supplies a social and political leavening in the life of a city. Middle-class people demand good schools and integrity in government. They support churches, lodges, parent-teacher associations, scout troops, better-housing committees, art galleries, and operas. It is the middle class, in short, that asserts a conception of the public interest. Now its activity is increasingly concentrated in the suburbs [p. 14].

But this same middle class manifests a sense of superior group position in regard to race. This class wants “good government” for themselves; it wants good schools for its children. At the same time, many of its members sneak into the black community by day, exploit it, and take the money home to their middle-class communities at night to support their operas and art galleries and comfortable homes. When not actually robbing, they will fight off the handful of more affluent black people who seek to move in; when they approve or even seek token integration, it applies only to black people like themselves—as “white” as possible. This class is the backbone of institutional racism in this country.

(Thus we reject the goal of assimilation into middle-class America because the values of that class are in themselves anti-humanist and because that class as a social force perpetuates racism. We must face the fact that, in the past, what we have called the movement has not really questioned the middle-class values and institutions of this country. If anything, it has accepted those values and institutions without fully realizing their racist nature. Reorientation means an emphasis on the dignity of man, not on the sanctity of property. It means the creation of a society where human misery and poverty are repugnant to that society, not an indication of laziness or lack of initiative. The creation of new values means the establishment of a society based, as Killens expresses it in *Black Man's Burden*, on “free people,” not “free enterprise” (p. 167). To do this means to modernize—indeed, to civilize—this country.

Supporting the old values are old political and economic structures; these must also be “modernized.” We should at this point distinguish between “structures” and “system.” By system, we have in mind the entire American complex of basic institutions, values, beliefs, etc. By structures, we mean the specific institutions (political parties, interest

groups, bureaucratic administrations) which exist to conduct the business of that system. Obviously, the first is broader than the second. Also, the second assumes the legitimacy of the first. Our view is that, given the illegitimacy of the system, we cannot then proceed to transform that system with existing structures.

The two major political parties in this country have become non-viable entities for the legitimate representation of the real needs of masses—especially blacks—in this country. Walter Lippmann raised the same point in his syndicated column of December 8, 1966. He pointed out that the party system in the United States developed before our society became as technologically complex as it is now. He says that the ways in which men live and define themselves are changing radically. Old ideological issues, once the subject of passionate controversy, Lippmann argues, are of little interest today. He asks whether the great urban complexes—which are rapidly becoming the centers of black population in the U.S.—can be run with the same systems and ideas that derive from a time when America was a country of small villages and farms. While not addressing himself directly to the question of race, Lippmann raises a major question about our political institutions; and the crisis of race in America may be its major symptom.

Black people have seen the city planning commissions, the urban renewal commissions, the boards of education and the police departments fail to speak to their needs in a meaningful way. We must devise new structures, new institutions to replace those forms or to make them responsive. There is nothing sacred or inevitable about old institutions; the focus must be on people, not forms.

Existing structures and established ways of doing things have a way of perpetuating themselves and for this reason, the modernizing process will be difficult. Therefore, timidity in calling into question the boards of education or the police departments will not do. They must be challenged

forcefully and clearly. If this means the creation of parallel community institutions, then that must be the solution. If this means that black parents must gain control over the operation of the schools in the black community, then that must be the solution. The search for new forms means the search for institutions that will, for once, make decisions in the interest of black people. It means, for example, a building inspection department that neither winks at violations of building codes by absentee slumlords nor imposes meaningless fines which permit them to continue their exploitation of the black community.

Essential to the modernization of structures is a broadened base of political participation. More and more people must become politically sensitive and active (we have already seen this happening in some areas of the South). People must no longer be tied, by small incentives or handouts, to a corrupting and corruptible white machine. Black people will choose their own leaders and hold those leaders responsible to *them*. A broadened base means an end to the condition described by James Wilson in *Negro Politics*, whereby “Negroes tended to be the objects rather than the subjects of civic action. Things are often done for, or about, or to, or because of Negroes, but they are less frequently done *by* Negroes” (p. 133). Broadening the base of political participation, then, has as much to do with the quality of black participation as with the quantity. We are fully aware that the black vote, especially in the North, has been pulled out of white pockets and “delivered” whenever it was in the interest of white politicians to do so. That vote must no longer be controllable by those who have neither the interests nor the demonstrated concern of black people in mind.

As the base broadens, as more and more black people become activated, they will perceive more clearly the special disadvantages heaped upon them as a group. They will perceive that the larger society is growing more affluent

while the black society is retrogressing, as daily life and mounting statistics clearly show (see Chapters I and VIII). V. O. Key describes what often happens next, in *Politics, Parties and Pressure Groups*: "A factor of great significance in the setting off of political movements is an abrupt change for the worse in the status of one group relative to that of other groups in society. . . . A rapid change for the worse . . . in the relative status of any group . . . is likely to precipitate political action" (p. 24). Black people will become increasingly active as they notice that their retro-
essive status exists in large measure because of values and
institutions arraigned against them. They will begin to stress
and strain and call the entire system into question. Political
modernization will be in motion. We believe that it is now
in motion. One form of that motion is Black Power.

■

The adoption of the concept of Black Power is one of the most legitimate and healthy developments in American politics and race relations in our time. The concept of Black Power speaks to all the needs mentioned in this chapter. It is a call for black people in this country to unite, to recognize their heritage, to build a sense of community. It is a call for black people to begin to define their own goals, to lead their own organizations and to support those organizations. It is a call to reject the racist institutions and values of this society.

The concept of Black Power rests on a fundamental premise: *Before a group can enter the open society, it must first close ranks.* By this we mean that group solidarity is necessary before a group can operate effectively from a bargaining position of strength in a pluralistic society. Traditionally, each new ethnic group in this society has found the route to social and political viability through the organization of its own institutions with which to represent its needs within the larger society. Studies in voting behavior spe-

cifically, and political behavior generally, have made it clear that politically the American pot has not melted. Italians vote for Rubino over O'Brien; Irish for Murphy over Goldberg, etc. This phenomenon may seem distasteful to some, but it has been and remains today a central fact of the American political system. There are other examples of ways in which groups in the society have remembered their roots and used this effectively in the political arena. Theodore Sorensen describes the politics of foreign aid during the Kennedy Administration in his book *Kennedy*:

No powerful constituencies or interest groups backed foreign aid. The Marshall Plan at least had appealed to Americans who traced their roots to the Western European nations aided. But there were few voters who identified with India, Colombia or Tanganyika [p. 351].

The extent to which black Americans can and do "trace their roots" to Africa, to that extent will they be able to be more effective on the political scene.

A white reporter set forth this point in other terms when he made the following observation about white Mississippi's manipulation of the anti-poverty program:

The war on poverty has been predicated on the notion that there is such a thing as a community which can be defined geographically and mobilized for a collective effort to help the poor. This theory has no relationship to reality in the deep South. In every Mississippi county there are two communities. Despite all the pious platitudes of the moderates on both sides, these two communities habitually see their interests in terms of conflict rather than cooperation. Only when the Negro community can muster enough political, economic and professional strength to compete on somewhat equal terms, will Negroes believe in the possibility of true cooperation and whites accept its necessity. En route to integration, the Negro community needs to develop a greater independence—a chance to run its own affairs and not cave in whenever "the man" barks—or so it seems to me, and to

most of the knowledgeable people with whom I talked in Mississippi. To OEO, this judgment may sound like black nationalism. . . .¹

The point is obvious: black people must lead and run their own organizations. Only black people can convey the revolutionary idea—and it is a revolutionary idea—that black people are able to do things themselves. Only they can help create in the community an aroused and continuing black consciousness that will provide the basis for political strength. In the past, white allies have often furthered white supremacy without the whites involved realizing it, or even wanting to do so. Black people must come together and do things for themselves. They must achieve self-identity and self-determination in order to have their daily needs met.

Black Power means, for example, that in Lowndes County, Alabama, a black sheriff can end police brutality. A black tax assessor and tax collector and county board of revenue can lay, collect, and channel tax monies for the building of better roads and schools serving black people. In such areas as Lowndes, where black people have a majority, they will attempt to use power to exercise control. This is what they seek: control. When black people lack a majority, Black Power means proper representation and sharing of control. It means the creation of power bases, of strength, from which black people can press to change local or nation-wide patterns of oppression—instead of from weakness.

It does not mean merely putting black faces into office. Black visibility is not Black Power. Most of the black politicians around the country today are not examples of Black Power. The power must be that of a community, and emanate from there. The black politicians must start from there. The black politicians must stop being representatives

¹ Christopher Jencks, "Accommodating Whites: A New Look at Mississippi," *The New Republic* (April 16, 1966).

of "downtown" machines, whatever the cost might be in terms of lost patronage and holiday handouts.

Black Power recognizes—it must recognize—the ethnic basis of American politics as well as the power-oriented nature of American politics. Black Power therefore calls for black people to consolidate behind their own, so that they can bargain from a position of strength. But while we endorse the procedure of group solidarity and identity for the purpose of attaining certain goals in the body politic, this does not mean that black people should strive for the same kind of rewards (i.e., end results) obtained by the white society. The ultimate values and goals are not domination or exploitation of other groups, but rather an effective share in the total power of the society.

Nevertheless, some observers have labeled those who advocate Black Power as racists; they have said that the call for self-identification and self-determination is "racism in reverse" or "black supremacy." This is a deliberate and absurd lie. There is no analogy—by any stretch of definition or imagination—between the advocates of Black Power and white racists. Racism is not merely exclusion on the basis of race but exclusion for the purpose of subjugating or maintaining subjugation. The goal of the racists is to keep black people on the bottom, arbitrarily and dictatorially, as they have done in this country for over three hundred years. The goal of black self-determination and black self-identity—Black Power—is full participation in the decision-making processes affecting the lives of black people, and recognition of the virtues in themselves as black people. The black people of this country have not lynched whites, bombed their churches, murdered their children and manipulated laws and institutions to maintain oppression. White racists have. Congressional laws, one after the other, have not been necessary to stop black people from oppressing others and denying others the full enjoyment of their rights. White racists have made such laws necessary. The

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goal of Black Power is positive and functional to a free and viable society. No white racist can make this claim.

A great deal of public attention and press space was devoted to the hysterical accusation of "black racism" when the call for Black Power was first sounded. A national committee of influential black churchmen affiliated with the National Council of Churches, despite their obvious respectability and responsibility, had to resort to a paid advertisement to articulate their position, while anyone yapping "black racism" made front-page news. In their statement, published in the *New York Times* of July 31, 1966, the churchmen said:

We, an informal group of Negro churchmen in America, are deeply disturbed about the crisis brought upon our country by historic distortions of important human realities in the controversy about "black power." What we see shining through the variety of rhetoric is not anything new but the same old problem of power and race which has faced our beloved country since 1619.

. . . The conscience of black men is corrupted because having no power to implement the demands of conscience, the concern for justice in the absence of justice becomes a chaotic self-surrender. Powerlessness breeds a race of beggars. We are faced with a situation where powerless conscience meets conscienceless power, threatening the very foundations of our Nation.

We deplore the overt violence of riots, but we feel it is more important to focus on the real sources of these eruptions. These sources may be abetted inside the Ghetto, but their basic cause lies in the silent and covert violence which white middle class America inflicts upon the victims of the inner city.

. . . In short, the failure of American leaders to use American power to create equal opportunity *in life* as well as *law*, this is the real problem and not the anguished cry for black power.

. . . Without the capacity to participate with power, i.e.,

to have some organized political and economic strength to really influence people with whom one interacts, integration is not meaningful.

. . . America has asked its Negro citizens to fight for opportunity as *individuals*, whereas at certain points in our history what we have needed most has been opportunity for the *whole group*, not just for selected and approved Negroes.

. . . We must not apologize for the existence of this form of group power, for we have been oppressed as a group and not as individuals. We will not find our way out of that oppression until both we and America accept the need for Negro Americans, as well as for Jews, Italians, Poles, and white Anglo-Saxon Protestants, among others, to have and to wield group power.

It is a commentary on the fundamentally racist nature of this society that the concept of group strength for black people must be articulated—not to mention defended. No other group would submit to being led by others. Italians do not run the Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith. Irish do not chair Christopher Columbus Societies. Yet when black people call for black-run and all-black organizations, they are immediately classed in a category with the Ku Klux Klan. This is interesting and ironic, but by no means surprising: the society does not expect black people to be able to take care of their business, and there are many who prefer it precisely that way.

In the end, we cannot and shall not offer any guarantees that Black Power, if achieved, would be non-racist. No one can predict human behavior. Social change always has unanticipated consequences. If black racism is what the larger society fears, we cannot help them. We can only state what we hope will be the result, given the fact that the present situation is unacceptable and that we have no real alternative but to work for Black Power. The final truth is that the white society is not entitled to reassurances, even if it were possible to offer them.

We have outlined the meaning and goals of Black Power; we have also discussed one major thing which it is not. There are others of greater importance. The advocates of Black Power reject the old slogans and meaningless rhetoric of previous years in the civil rights struggle. The language of yesterday is indeed irrelevant: progress, non-violence, integration, fear of "white backlash," coalition. Let us look at the rhetoric and see why these terms must be set aside or redefined.

One of the tragedies of the struggle against racism is that up to this point there has been no national organization which could speak to the growing militancy of young black people in the urban ghettos and the black-belt South. There has been only a "civil rights" movement, whose tone of voice was adapted to an audience of middle-class whites. It served as a sort of buffer zone between that audience and angry young blacks. It claimed to speak for the needs of a community, but it did not speak in the tone of that community. None of its so-called leaders could go into a rioting community and be listened to. In a sense, the blame must be shared—along with the mass media—by those leaders for what happened in Watts, Harlem, Chicago, Cleveland and other places. Each time the black people in those cities saw Dr. Martin Luther King get slapped they became angry. When they saw little black girls bombed to death *in a church* and civil rights workers ambushed and murdered, they were angrier; and when nothing happened, they were steaming mad. We had nothing to offer that they could see, except to go out and be beaten again. We helped to build their frustration.

We had only the old language of love and suffering. And in most places—that is, from the liberals and middle class—we got back the old language of patience and progress. The civil rights leaders were saying to the country: "Look, you guys are supposed to be nice guys, and we are only going to do what we are supposed to do. Why do you

beat us up? Why don't you give us what we ask? Why don't you straighten yourselves out?" For the masses of black people, this language resulted in virtually nothing. In fact, their objective day-to-day condition worsened. The unemployment rate among black people increased while that among whites declined. Housing conditions in the black communities deteriorated. Schools in the black ghettos continued to plod along on outmoded techniques, inadequate curricula, and with all too many tired and indifferent teachers. Meanwhile, the President picked up the refrain of "We Shall Overcome" while the Congress passed civil rights law after civil rights law, only to have them effectively nullified by deliberately weak enforcement. "Progress is being made," we were told.

Such language, along with admonitions to remain non-violent and fear the white backlash, convinced some that that course was the *only* course to follow. It misled some into believing that a black minority could bow its head and get whipped into a meaningful position of power. The very notion is absurd. The white society devised the language, adopted the rules and had the black community narcotized into believing that that language and those rules were, in fact, relevant. The black community was told time and again how *other* immigrants finally won *acceptance*: that is, by following the Protestant Ethic of Work and Achievement. They worked hard; therefore, they achieved. We were not told that it was by building Irish Power, Italian Power, Polish Power or Jewish Power that these groups got themselves together and operated from positions of strength. We were not told that "the American dream" wasn't designed for black people. That while today, to whites, the dream may *seem* to include black people, it cannot do so by the very nature of this nation's political and economic system, which imposes institutional racism on the black masses if not upon every individual black. A notable comment on that "dream" was made by

Dr. Percy Julian, the black scientist and director of the Julian Research Institute in Chicago, a man for whom the dream seems to have come true. While not subscribing to "black power" as he understood it, Dr. Julian clearly understood the basis for it: "The false concept of basic Negro inferiority is one of the curses that still lingers. It is a problem created by the white man. Our children just no longer are going to accept the patience we were taught by our generation. We were taught a pretty little lie—excel and the whole world lies open before you. *I obeyed the injunction and found it to be wishful thinking.*" (Authors' italics) ²

A key phrase in our buffer-zone days was non-violence. For years it has been thought that black people would not literally fight for their lives. Why this has been so is not entirely clear; neither the larger society nor black people are noted for passivity. The notion apparently stems from the years of marches and demonstrations and sit-ins where black people did not strike back and the violence always came from white mobs. There are many who still sincerely believe in that approach. From our viewpoint, rampaging white mobs and white night-riders must be made to understand that their days of free head-whipping are over. Black people should and must fight back. Nothing more quickly repels someone bent on destroying you than the unequivocal message: "O.K., fool, make your move, and run the same risk I run of dying."

When the concept of Black Power is set forth, many people immediately conjure up notions of violence. The country's reaction to the Deacons for Defense and Justice, which originated in Louisiana, is instructive. Here is a group which realized that the "law" and law enforcement agencies would not protect people, so they had to do it themselves. If a nation fails to protect its citizens, then that nation cannot condemn those who take up the task them-

² *The New York Times* (April 30, 1967), p. 30.

selves. The Deacons and all other blacks who resort to self-defense represent a simple answer to a simple question: what man would not defend his family and home from attack?

But this frightened some white people, because they knew that black people would now fight back. They knew that this was precisely what *they* would have long since done if *they* were subjected to the injustices and oppression heaped on blacks. Those of us who advocate Black Power are quite clear in our own minds that a "non-violent" approach to civil rights is an approach black people cannot afford and a luxury white people do not deserve. It is crystal clear to us—and it must become so with the white society—that there can be no social order without social justice. White people must be made to understand that they must stop messing with black people, or the blacks will fight back!

Next, we must deal with the term "integration." According to its advocates, social justice will be accomplished by "integrating the Negro into the mainstream institutions of the society from which he has been traditionally excluded." This concept is based on the assumption that there is nothing of value in the black community and that little of value could be created among black people. The thing to do is siphon off the "acceptable" black people into the surrounding middle-class white community.

The goals of integrationists are middle-class goals, articulated primarily by a small group of Negroes with middle-class aspirations or status. Their kind of integration has meant that a few blacks "make it," leaving the black community, sapping it of leadership potential and know-how. As we noted in Chapter I, those token Negroes—absorbed into a white mass—are of no value to the remaining black masses. They become meaningless show-pieces for a conscience-soothed white society. Such people will state that they would prefer to be treated "only as individuals, not as

Negroes”; that they “are not and should not be preoccupied with race.” This is a totally unrealistic position. In the first place, black people have not suffered as individuals but as members of a group; therefore, their liberation lies in group action. This is why SNCC—and the concept of Black Power—affirms that helping individual black people to solve their problems on an individual basis does little to alleviate the mass of black people. Secondly, while color blindness *may* be a sound goal ultimately, we must realize that race is an overwhelming fact of life in this historical period. There is no black man in this country who can live “simply as a man.” His blackness is an ever-present fact of this racist society, whether he recognizes it or not. It is unlikely that this or the next generation will witness the time when race will no longer be relevant in the conduct of public affairs and in public policy decision-making. To realize this and to attempt to deal with it does not make one a racist or overly preoccupied with race; it puts one in the forefront of a significant *struggle*. If there is no intense struggle today, there will be no meaningful results tomorrow.

“Integration” as a goal today speaks to the problem of blackness not only in an unrealistic way but also in a despicable way. It is based on complete acceptance of the fact that in order to have a decent house or education, black people must move into a white neighborhood or send their children to a white school. This reinforces, among both black and white, the idea that “white” is automatically superior and “black” is by definition inferior. For this reason, “integration” is a subterfuge for the maintenance of white supremacy. It allows the nation to focus on a handful of Southern black children who get into white schools at a great price, and to ignore the ninety-four percent who are left in unimproved all-black schools. Such situations will not change until black people become equal in

a way that means something, and integration ceases to be a one-way street. Then integration does not mean draining skills and energies from the black ghetto into white neighborhoods. To sprinkle black children among white pupils in outlying schools is at best a stop-gap measure. The goal is not to take black children out of the black community and expose them to white middle-class values; the goal is to build and strengthen the black community.

“Integration” also means that black people must give up their identity, deny their heritage. We recall the conclusion of Killian and Grigg: “At the present time, integration as a solution to the race problem demands that the Negro fore swear his identity as a Negro.” The fact is that integration, as traditionally articulated, would abolish the black community. The fact is that what must be abolished is not the black community, but the dependent colonial status that has been inflicted upon it.

The racial and cultural personality of the black community must be preserved and that community must win its freedom while preserving its cultural integrity. Integrity includes a pride—in the sense of self-acceptance, not chauvinism—in being black, in the historical attainments and contributions of black people. No person can be healthy, complete and mature if he must deny a part of himself; this is what “integration” has required thus far. This is the essential difference between integration as it is currently practiced and the concept of Black Power.

The idea of cultural integrity is so obvious that it seems almost simple-minded to spell things out at this length. Yet millions of Americans resist such truths when they are applied to black people. Again, that resistance is a comment on the fundamental racism in the society. Irish Catholics took care of their own first without a lot of apology for doing so, without any dubious language from timid leadership about guarding against “backlash.” Every-

one understood it to be a perfectly legitimate procedure. Of course, there would be “backlash.” Organization begets counterorganization, but this was no reason to defer.

The so-called white backlash against black people is something else: the embedded traditions of institutional racism being brought into the open and calling forth overt manifestations of individual racism. In the summer of 1966, when the protest marches into Cicero, Illinois, began, the black people knew they were not allowed to live in Cicero and the white people knew it. When blacks began to demand the right to live in homes in that town, the whites simply reminded them of the status quo. Some people called this “backlash.” It was, in fact, racism defending itself. In the black community, this is called “White folks showing their color.” It is ludicrous to blame black people for what is simply an overt manifestation of white racism. Dr. Martin Luther King stated clearly that the protest marches were not the cause of the racism but merely exposed a long-term cancerous condition in the society.

We come now to the rhetoric of coalition as part of the traditional approach to ending racism: the concept of the civil rights movement as a kind of liaison between the powerful white community and a dependent black community. “Coalition” involves the whole question of how one approaches politics and political alliances. It is so basic to an understanding of Black Power that we will devote an entire chapter to the subject.

Stokely Carmichael, "What We Want," *New York Review of Books* (1966)

(...) WHITES WILL NOT SEE that I, for example, as a person oppressed because of my blackness, have common cause with other blacks who are oppressed because of blackness. This is not to say that there are no white people who see things as I do, but that it is black people I must speak to first. It must be the oppressed to whom SNCC addresses itself primarily, not to friends from the oppressing group.

From birth, black people are told a set of lies about themselves. We are told that we are lazy-yet I drive through the Delta area of Mississippi and watch black people picking cotton in the hot sun for fourteen hours. We are told, "If you work hard, you'll succeed"—but if that were true, black people would own this country. We are oppressed because we are black-not because we are ignorant, not because we are lazy, not because we're stupid (and got good rhythm), but because we're black.

I remember that when I was a boy, I used to go to see Tarzan movies on Saturday. White Tarzan used to beat up the black natives. I would sit there yelling, "Kill the beasts, kill the savages, kill 'em!" I was saying: Kill me. It was as if a Jewish boy watched Nazis taking Jews off to concentration camps and cheered them on. Today, I want the chief to beat hell out of Tarzan and send him back to Europe. But it takes time to become free of the lies and their shaming effect on black minds. It takes time to reject the most important lie: that black people inherently can't do to same things white people can do, unless white people help them.

The need for psychological equality is the reason why SNCC today believes that blacks must organize in the black community. Only black people can convey the revolutionary idea that black people are able to do things themselves. Only they can help create in the community an aroused and continuing black consciousness that will provide the basis for political strength. In the past, white allies have furthered white supremacy without the whites involved realizing it-or wanting it, I think. Black people must do things for themselves; they must get poverty money they will control and spend themselves, they must conduct tutorial programs themselves so that black children can identify with black people. This is one reason Africa has such importance: The reality of black men ruling their own natives gives blacks elsewhere a sense of possibility, of power, which they do not now have (...)

The Combahee River Collective Statement

Combahee River Collective

We are a collective of Black feminists who have been meeting together since 1974. [1] During that time we have been involved in the process of defining and clarifying our politics, while at the same time doing political work within our own group and in coalition with other progressive organizations and movements. The most general statement of our politics at the present time would be that we are actively committed to struggling against racial, sexual, heterosexual, and class oppression, and see as our particular task the development of integrated analysis and practice based upon the fact that the major systems of oppression are interlocking. The synthesis of these oppressions creates the conditions of our lives. As Black women we see Black feminism as the logical political movement to combat the manifold and simultaneous oppressions that all women of color face.

We will discuss four major topics in the paper that follows: (1) the genesis of contemporary Black feminism; (2) what we believe, i.e., the specific province of our politics; (3) the problems in organizing Black feminists, including a brief herstory of our collective; and (4) Black feminist issues and practice.

1. The genesis of Contemporary Black Feminism

Before looking at the recent development of Black feminism we would like to affirm that we find our origins in the historical reality of Afro-American women's continuous life-and-death struggle for survival and liberation. Black women's extremely negative relationship to the American political system (a system of white male rule) has always been determined by our membership in two oppressed racial and sexual castes. As Angela Davis points out in "Reflections on the Black Woman's Role in the Community of Slaves," Black women have always embodied, if only in their physical manifestation, an adversary stance to white male rule and have actively resisted its inroads upon them and their communities in both dramatic and subtle ways. There have always been Black women activists—some known, like Sojourner Truth, Harriet Tubman, Frances E. W. Harper, Ida B. Wells Barnett, and Mary Church Terrell, and thousands upon thousands unknown—who have had a shared awareness of how their sexual identity combined with their racial identity to make their whole life situation and the focus of their political struggles unique. Contemporary Black feminism is the outgrowth of countless generations of personal sacrifice, militancy, and work by our mothers and sisters.

A Black feminist presence has evolved most obviously in connection with the second wave of the American women's movement beginning in the late 1960s. Black, other Third World, and working women have been involved in the feminist movement from its start, but both outside reactionary forces and racism and elitism within the movement itself have served to obscure our participation. In 1973, Black feminists, primarily located in New York, felt the necessity of forming a separate Black feminist group. This became the National Black Feminist Organization (NBFO).

Black feminist politics also have an obvious connection to movements for Black liberation, particularly those of the 1960s and 1970s. Many of us were active in those movements (Civil Rights, Black nationalism, the Black Panthers), and all of our lives were greatly affected and changed by their ideologies, their goals, and the tactics used to achieve their goals. It was our experience and disillusionment within these liberation movements, as well as experience on the periphery of the white male left, that led to the need to develop a politics that was anti-racist, unlike those of white women, and anti-sexist, unlike those of Black and white men.

There is also undeniably a personal genesis for Black Feminism, that is, the political realization that comes from the seemingly personal experiences of individual Black women's lives. Black feminists and many more Black women who do not define themselves as feminists have all experienced sexual oppression as a constant factor in our day-to-day existence. As children we realized that we were different from boys and that we were treated differently. For example, we were told in the same breath to be quiet both for the sake of being "ladylike" and to make us less objectionable in the eyes of white people. As we grew older we became aware of the threat of physical and sexual abuse by men. However, we had no way of conceptualizing what was so apparent to us, what we knew was really happening.

Black feminists often talk about their feelings of craziness before becoming conscious of the concepts of sexual politics, patriarchal rule, and most importantly, feminism, the political analysis and practice that we women use to struggle against our oppression. The fact that racial politics and indeed racism are pervasive factors in our lives did not allow us, and still does not allow most Black women, to look more deeply into our own experiences and, from that sharing and growing consciousness, to build a politics that will change our lives and inevitably end our oppression. Our development must also be tied to the contemporary economic and political position of Black people. The post World War II generation of Black youth was the first to be able to minimally partake of certain educational and employment options, previously closed completely to Black people. Although our economic position is still at the very bottom of the American capitalistic economy, a handful of us have been able to gain certain tools as a result of tokenism in education and employment which potentially enable us to more effectively fight our oppression.

A combined anti-racist and anti-sexist position drew us together initially, and as we developed politically we addressed ourselves to heterosexism and economic oppression under capitalism.

2. What We Believe

Above all else, Our politics initially sprang from the shared belief that Black women are inherently valuable, that our liberation is a necessity not as an adjunct to somebody else's may because of our need as human persons for autonomy. This may seem so obvious as to sound simplistic, but it is apparent that no other ostensibly progressive movement has ever considered our specific oppression as a priority or worked seriously for the ending of that oppression. Merely naming the pejorative stereotypes attributed to Black women (e.g. mammy, matriarch, Sapphire, whore, bulldagger), let alone cataloguing the cruel, often murderous, treatment we receive, Indicates how little value has been placed upon our lives during four centuries of bondage in the Western hemisphere. We realize that the only people who care enough about us to work consistently for our liberation are us. Our politics evolve from a healthy love for ourselves, our sisters and our community which allows us to continue our struggle and work.

This focusing upon our own oppression is embodied in the concept of identity politics. We believe that the most profound and potentially most radical politics come directly out of our own identity, as opposed to working to end somebody else's oppression. In the case of Black women this is a particularly repugnant, dangerous, threatening, and therefore revolutionary concept because it is obvious from looking at all the political movements that have preceded us that anyone is more worthy of liberation than ourselves. We reject pedestals, queenhood, and walking ten paces behind. To be recognized as human, levelly human, is enough.

We believe that sexual politics under patriarchy is as pervasive in Black women's lives as are the politics of class and race. We also often find it difficult to separate race from class from sex oppression because in our lives they are most often experienced simultaneously. We know that there is such a thing as racial-sexual oppression which is neither solely racial nor solely sexual, e.g., the history of rape of Black women by white men as a weapon of political repression.

Although we are feminists and Lesbians, we feel solidarity with progressive Black men and do not advocate the fractionalization that white women who are separatists demand. Our situation as Black people necessitates that we have solidarity around the fact of race, which white women of course do not need to have with white men, unless it is their negative solidarity as racial oppressors. We struggle together with Black men against racism, while we also struggle with Black men about sexism.

We realize that the liberation of all oppressed peoples necessitates the destruction of the political-economic systems of capitalism and imperialism as well as patriarchy. We are socialists because we believe that work must be organized for the collective benefit of those who do the work and create the products, and not for the profit of the bosses. Material resources must be equally distributed among those who create these resources. We are not convinced, however, that a socialist revolution that is not also a feminist and anti-racist revolution will guarantee our liberation. We have arrived at the necessity for developing an understanding of class relationships that takes into account the specific class position of Black women who are generally marginal in the labor force, while at this particular time some of us are temporarily viewed as doubly desirable tokens at white-collar and professional levels. We need to articulate the real class situation of persons who are not merely raceless, sexless workers, but for whom racial and sexual oppression are significant determinants in their working/economic lives. Although we are in essential agreement with Marx's theory as it applied to the very specific economic relationships he analyzed, we know that his analysis must be extended further in order for us to understand our specific economic situation as Black women.

A political contribution which we feel we have already made is the expansion of the feminist principle that the personal is political. In our consciousness-raising sessions, for example, we have in many ways gone beyond white women's revelations because we are dealing with the implications of race and class as well as sex. Even our Black women's style of talking/testifying in Black language about what we have experienced has a resonance that is both cultural and political. We have spent a great deal of energy delving into the cultural and experiential nature of our oppression out of necessity because none of these matters has ever been looked at before. No one before has ever examined the multilayered texture of Black women's lives. An example of this kind of revelation/conceptualization occurred at a meeting as we discussed the ways in which our early intellectual interests had been attacked by our peers, particularly Black males. We discovered that all of us, because we were "smart" had also been considered "ugly," i.e., "smart-ugly." "Smart-ugly" crystallized the way in which most of us had been forced to develop our intellects at great cost to our "social" lives. The sanctions in the Black and white communities against Black women thinkers is comparatively much higher than for white women, particularly ones from the educated middle and upper classes.

As we have already stated, we reject the stance of Lesbian separatism because it is not a viable political analysis or strategy for us. It leaves out far too much and far too many people, particularly Black men, women, and children. We have a great deal of criticism and loathing for what men have been socialized to be in this society: what they support, how they act, and how they oppress. But we do not have the misguided notion that it is their maleness, per se—i.e., their biological maleness—that makes them what they are. As Black women we find any type of biological determinism a particularly dangerous and reactionary basis upon which to build a politic. We must also question whether Lesbian separatism is an adequate and progressive political analysis and strategy, even for those who practice it, since it so completely denies any but the sexual sources of women's oppression, negating the facts of class and race.

3. Problems in Organizing Black Feminists

During our years together as a Black feminist collective we have experienced success and defeat, joy and pain, victory and failure. We have found that it is very difficult to organize around Black feminist issues, difficult even to announce in certain contexts that we are Black feminists. We have tried to think about the reasons for our difficulties, particularly since the white women's movement continues to be strong and to grow in many directions. In this section we will discuss some of the general reasons for the organizing problems we face and also talk specifically about the stages in organizing our own collective.

The major source of difficulty in our political work is that we are not just trying to fight oppression on one front or even two, but instead to address a whole range of oppressions. We do not have racial, sexual, heterosexual, or class privilege to rely upon, nor do we have even the minimal access to resources and power that groups who possess anyone of these types of privilege have.

The psychological toll of being a Black woman and the difficulties this presents in reaching political consciousness and doing political work can never be underestimated. There is a very low value placed upon Black women's psyches in this society, which is both racist and sexist. As an early group member once said, "We are all damaged people merely by virtue of being Black women." We are dispossessed psychologically and on every other level, and yet we feel the necessity to struggle to change the condition of all Black women. In "A Black Feminist's Search for Sisterhood," Michele Wallace arrives at this conclusion:

We exists as women who are Black who are feminists, each stranded for the moment, working independently because there is not yet an environment in this society remotely congenial to our struggle—because, being on the bottom, we would have to do what no one else has done: we would have to fight the world. [2]

Wallace is pessimistic but realistic in her assessment of Black feminists' position, particularly in her allusion to the nearly classic isolation most of us face. We might use our position at the bottom, however, to make a clear leap into revolutionary action. If Black women were free, it would mean that everyone else would have to be free since our freedom would necessitate the destruction of all the systems of oppression.

Feminism is, nevertheless, very threatening to the majority of Black people because it calls into question some of the most basic assumptions about our existence, i.e., that sex should be a determinant of power relationships. Here is the way male and female roles were defined in a Black nationalist pamphlet from the early 1970s:

We understand that it is and has been traditional that the man is the head of the house. He is the leader of the house/nation because his knowledge of the world is broader, his awareness is greater, his understanding is fuller and his application of this information is wiser... After all, it is only reasonable that the man be the head of the house because he is able to defend and protect the development of his home... Women cannot do the same things as men—they are made by nature to function differently. Equality of men and women is something that cannot happen even in the abstract world. Men are not equal to other men, i.e. ability, experience or even understanding. The value of men and women can be seen as in the value of gold and silver—they are not equal but both have great value. We must realize that men and women are a complement to each other because there is no house/family without a man and his wife. Both are essential to the development of any life. [3]

The material conditions of most Black women would hardly lead them to upset both economic and sexual arrangements that seem to represent some stability in their lives. Many Black women have a good understanding of both sexism and racism, but because of the everyday constrictions of their lives, cannot risk struggling against them both.

The reaction of Black men to feminism has been notoriously negative. They are, of course, even more threatened than Black women by the possibility that Black feminists might organize around our own needs. They realize that they might not only lose valuable and hardworking allies in their struggles but that they might also be forced to change their habitually sexist ways of interacting with and oppressing Black women. Accusations that Black feminism divides the Black struggle are powerful deterrents to the growth of an autonomous Black women's movement.

Still, hundreds of women have been active at different times during the three-year existence of our group. And every Black woman who came, came out of a strongly-felt need for some level of possibility that did not previously exist in her life.

When we first started meeting early in 1974 after the NBFO first eastern regional conference, we did not have a strategy for organizing, or even a focus. We just wanted to see what we had. After a period of months of not meeting, we began to meet again late in the year and started doing an intense variety of consciousness-raising. The overwhelming feeling that we had is that after years and years we had finally found each other. Although we were not doing political work as a group, individuals continued their involvement in Lesbian politics, sterilization abuse and abortion rights work, Third World Women's International Women's Day activities, and support activity for the trials of Dr. Kenneth Edelin, Joan Little, and Inéz García. During our first summer when membership had dropped off considerably, those of us remaining devoted serious discussion to the possibility of opening a refuge for battered women in a Black community. (There was no refuge in Boston at that time.) We also decided around that time to become an independent collective since we had serious disagreements with NBFO's bourgeois-feminist stance and their lack of a clear political focus.

We also were contacted at that time by socialist feminists, with whom we had worked on abortion rights activities, who wanted to encourage us to attend the National Socialist Feminist Conference in Yellow Springs. One of our members did attend and despite the narrowness of the ideology that was promoted at that particular conference, we became more aware of the need for us to understand our own economic situation and to make our own economic analysis.

In the fall, when some members returned, we experienced several months of comparative inactivity and internal disagreements which were first conceptualized as a Lesbian-straight split but which were also the result of class and political differences. During the summer those of us who were still meeting had determined the need to do political work and to move beyond consciousness-raising and serving exclusively as an emotional support group. At the beginning of 1976, when some of the women who had not wanted to do political work and who also had voiced disagreements stopped attending of their own accord, we again looked for a focus. We decided at that time, with the addition of new members, to become a study group. We had always shared our reading with each other, and some of us had written papers on Black feminism for group discussion a few months before this decision was made. We began functioning as a study group and

also began discussing the possibility of starting a Black feminist publication. We had a retreat in the late spring which provided a time for both political discussion and working out interpersonal issues. Currently we are planning to gather together a collection of Black feminist writing. We feel that it is absolutely essential to demonstrate the reality of our politics to other Black women and believe that we can do this through writing and distributing our work. The fact that individual Black feminists are living in isolation all over the country, that our own numbers are small, and that we have some skills in writing, printing, and publishing makes us want to carry out these kinds of projects as a means of organizing Black feminists as we continue to do political work in coalition with other groups.

4. Black Feminist Issues and Projects

During our time together we have identified and worked on many issues of particular relevance to Black women. The inclusiveness of our politics makes us concerned with any situation that impinges upon the lives of women, Third World and working people. We are of course particularly committed to working on those struggles in which race, sex, and class are simultaneous factors in oppression. We might, for example, become involved in workplace organizing at a factory that employs Third World women or picket a hospital that is cutting back on already inadequate health care to a Third World community, or set up a rape crisis center in a Black neighborhood. Organizing around welfare and daycare concerns might also be a focus. The work to be done and the countless issues that this work represents merely reflect the pervasiveness of our oppression.

Issues and projects that collective members have actually worked on are sterilization abuse, abortion rights, battered women, rape and health care. We have also done many workshops and educationals on Black feminism on college campuses, at women's conferences, and most recently for high school women.

One issue that is of major concern to us and that we have begun to publicly address is racism in the white women's movement. As Black feminists we are made constantly and painfully aware of how little effort white women have made to understand and combat their racism, which requires among other things that they have a more than superficial comprehension of race, color, and Black history and culture. Eliminating racism in the white women's movement is by definition work for white women to do, but we will continue to speak to and demand accountability on this issue.

In the practice of our politics we do not believe that the end always justifies the means. Many reactionary and destructive acts have been done in the name of achieving "correct" political goals. As feminists we do not want to mess over people in the name of politics. We believe in collective process and a nonhierarchical distribution of power within our own group and in our vision of a revolutionary society. We are committed to a continual examination of our politics as they develop through criticism and self-criticism as an essential aspect of our practice. In her introduction to *Sisterhood is Powerful* Robin Morgan writes:

I haven't the faintest notion what possible revolutionary role white heterosexual men could fulfill, since they are the very embodiment of reactionary-vested-interest-power.

As Black feminists and Lesbians we know that we have a very definite revolutionary task to perform and we are ready for the lifetime of work and struggle before us.

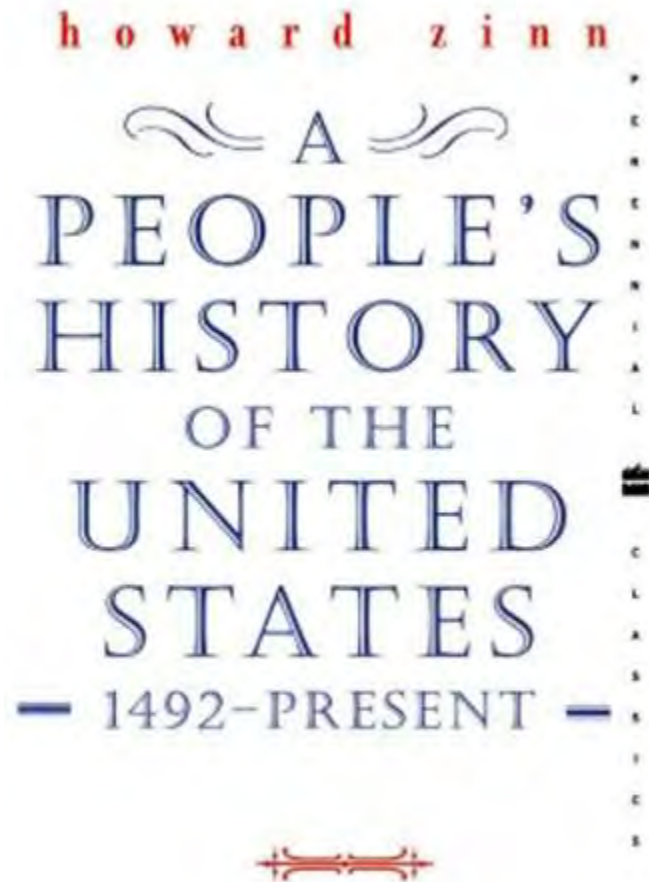
[1] This statement is dated April 1977.

[2] Wallace, Michele. "A Black Feminist's Search for Sisterhood," *The Village Voice*, 28 July 1975, pp. 6-7.

[3] Mumininas of Committee for Unified Newark, Mwanamke Mwananchi (*The Nationalist Woman*), Newark, N.J., ©1971, pp. 4-5.

A People's History of the United States, 1492-Present

By Howard Zinn



Afterword

I am often asked how I came to write this book. One answer is that my wife Roslyn urged me to write it, and continued to urge me at those times when, daunted by the magnitude of the project, I wanted to abandon it. Another is that the circumstances of my own life (which, as I now write, has spanned a fourth of the nation's history—a startling thought) demanded of me that I try to fashion a new kind of history. By that I mean a history different from what I had learned in college and in graduate school and from what I saw in the history texts given to students all over the country.

When I set out to write the book, I had been teaching history and what is grandiosely called "political science" for twenty years. Half of that time I was involved in the civil rights movement in the South (mostly while teaching at Spelman College in Atlanta, Georgia). And then there were ten years of activity against the war in Vietnam. These experiences were hardly a recipe for neutrality in the teaching and writing of history.

But my partisanship was undoubtedly shaped even earlier, by my upbringing in a family of working-class immigrants in New York, by my three years as a shipyard worker, and by my Air Force duty as a bombardier in the European theater (a strange word for that—"theater") in the second World War. That was all before I went to college under the GI Bill of Rights and began to study history.

By the time I began teaching and writing, I had no illusions about "objectivity," if that meant avoiding a point of view. I knew that a historian (or a journalist, or anyone telling a story) was forced to choose, out of an infinite number of facts, what to present, what to omit. And that decision inevitably would reflect, whether consciously or not, the interests of the historian.

There is a certain drumbeat of scolding one hears these days, about the need for students to learn facts. "Our young people are not being taught facts," said presidential candidate Robert Dole (and candidates are always so scrupulous about facts) to a gathering of American Legionnaires. I was reminded of the character in Dickens' *Hard Times*, the pedant Gradgrind, who admonished a younger teacher: "Teach nothing but facts, facts, facts."

But there is no such thing as a pure fact, innocent of interpretation. Behind every fact presented to the world—by a teacher, a writer, anyone—is a judgment. The judgment that has been made is that this fact is important, and that other facts, omitted, are not important.

There were themes of profound importance to me which I found missing in the orthodox histories that dominated American culture. The consequence of those omissions has been not simply to give a distorted view of the past but, more important, to mislead us all about the present.

For instance, there is the issue of class. It is pretended that, as in the Preamble to the Constitution, it is "we the people" who wrote that document, rather than fifty-five privileged white males whose class interest required a strong central government. That use of government for class purposes, to serve the needs of the wealthy and powerful, has continued throughout American history, down to the present day. It is disguised by language that suggests all of us-rich and poor and middle class- have a common interest.

Thus, the state of the nation is described in universal terms. The novelist Kurt Vonnegut invented the term "granfalloon" to describe a great bubble that must be punctured to see the complexity inside. When the president declares happily that "our economy is sound," he will not acknowledge that it is not at all sound for 40 or 50 million people who are struggling to survive, although it may be moderately sound for many in the middle class, and extremely sound for the richest 1 percent of the nation who own 40 percent of the nation's wealth.

Labels are given to periods in our history which reflect the well-being of one class and ignore the rest. When I was going through the files of Fiorello LaGuardia, who as a Congressman in the twenties represented East Harlem, I read the letters of desperate housewives, their husbands out of work, their children hungry, unable to pay their rent-all this in that period known as "the Jazz Age," the "Roaring Twenties."

What we learn about the past does not give us absolute truth about the present, but it may cause us to look deeper than the glib statements made by political leaders and the "experts" quoted in the press.

Class interest has always been obscured behind an all-encompassing veil called "the national interest." My own war experience, and the history of all those military interventions in which the United States was engaged, made me skeptical when I heard people in high political office invoke "the national interest" or "national security" to justify their policies. It was with such justifications that Truman initiated a "police action" in Korea that killed several million people, that Johnson and Nixon carried out a war in Indochina in which perhaps 3 million people died, that Reagan invaded Grenada, Bush attacked Panama and then Iraq, and Clinton bombed Iraq again and again.

Is there a "national interest" when a few people decide on war, and huge numbers of others—here and abroad—are killed or crippled as a result of such a decision? Should citizens not ask in whose interest are we doing what we are doing? Then why not, I came to think, tell the story of wars not through the eyes of the generals and diplomats but from the viewpoints of the GIs, of the parents who received the black-bordered telegrams, even of "the enemy."

What struck me as I began to study history was how nationalist fervor—inculcated from childhood on by pledges of allegiance, national anthems, flags waving and rhetoric blowing—permeated the educational systems of all countries, including our own. I wonder now how the foreign policies of the United States would look if we wiped out the national boundaries of the world, at least in our minds, and thought of all children everywhere as our own. Then we could never drop an atomic bomb on Hiroshima, or napalm on Vietnam, or wage war anywhere, because wars, especially in our time, are always wars against children, indeed our children.

And then there is, much as we would want to erase it, the ineradicable issue of race. It did not occur to me, when I first began to immerse myself in history, how badly twisted was the teaching and writing of history by its submersion of nonwhite people. Yes, Indians were there, and then gone. Black people were visible when slaves, then free and invisible. It was a white man's history.

From first grade to graduate school, I was given no inkling that the landing of Christopher Columbus in the New World initiated a genocide, in which the indigenous population of Hispaniola was annihilated. Or that this was just the first stage of what was presented as a benign expansion of the new nation (Louisiana "Purchase," Florida "Purchase," Mexican "Cession"), but which involved the violent expulsion of Indians, accompanied by unspeakable atrocities, from every square mile of the continent, until there was nothing to do with them but herd them into reservations.

I was invited, sometime in 1998, to speak at a symposium in Boston's historic Faneuil Hall, on the Boston Massacre. I said I would be glad to do that, so long as I did not have to deal with the Boston Massacre. And so my talk was not about the killing of five colonists by British troops in 1770. I thought that had been given an inordinate amount of attention for over two hundred years, because it served a certain patriotic function. Instead, I wanted to talk about the many massacres of nonwhite people in our history, which would not reinforce patriotic pride but remind us of the long legacy of racism in our country, still smoldering and needing attention.

Every American schoolchild learns about the Boston Massacre. But who learns about the massacre of 600 men, women, and children of the Pequot tribe in New England in 1637? Or the massacre—in the midst of the Civil War—of hundreds of Indian families at Sand Creek,

Colorado, by U.S. soldiers? Or the military attack by 200 U.S. cavalrymen in 1870 which wiped out a sleeping camp of Piegan Indians in Montana?

It was not until I joined the faculty of Spelman College, a college for black women in Atlanta, Georgia, that I began to read the African-American historians who never appeared on my reading lists in graduate school (W. E. B. Du Bois, Rayford Logan, Lawrence Reddick, Horace Mann Bond, John Hope Franklin). Nowhere in my history education had I learned about the massacres of black people that took place again and again, amid the silence of a national government pledged, by the Constitution, to protect equal rights for all.

For instance, in East St. Louis in 1917 there occurred one of the many "race riots" that took place in what our white-oriented history books called the "Progressive Era." There, white workers, angered by the influx of black workers, killed perhaps 200 people, provoking an angry article by W. E. B. Du Bois called "The Massacre of East St. Louis," and causing the performing artist Josephine Baker to say: "The very idea of America makes me shake and tremble and gives me nightmares."

I wanted, in writing this book, to awaken a greater consciousness of class conflict, racial injustice, sexual inequality, and national arrogance. But even as I tried to make up for what I saw as serious omissions, I nevertheless neglected groups in American society that had always been missing from orthodox histories. I became aware of this, and embarrassed by it, when people wrote to me after reading *A People's History*, praising the book but pointing gently (sometimes not so gently) to its shortcomings.

It was perhaps my stronger connection to the East Coast of the United States that caused me to ignore the large numbers of Latino and Latina people who lived in California and the Southwest, and their struggles for justice. Readers who want to learn more about that might look into these extraordinary books: *De Colons Means All of Us* by Elizabeth Martinet; *Zapata's Disciple: Essays by Martin Espada*; *Aztlan and Viet Nam: Chicano and Chicana Experiences of the War*, edited by George Mariscal.

And I suppose, it was my own sexual orientation that accounted for my minimal treatment of the issue of gay and lesbian rights. I tried, when a new edition appeared in 1995, to make up for this. But readers will have to look further to get a more substantial account of the remarkable change in the national culture that took place when men and women who were "queer" (a pejorative term for some people; an honorable one for others) asserted their humanity boldly, courageously, to the larger society.

As we pass from one century to another, one millennium to one another, we would like to think that history itself is transformed as dramatically as the calendar. However, it rushes on, as it always did, with two forces racing toward the future, one splendidly uniformed, the other ragged but inspired.

There is the past and its continuing horrors: violence, war, prejudices against those who are different, outrageous monopolization of the good earth's wealth by a few, political power in the hands of liars and murderers, the building of prisons instead of schools, the poisoning of the press and the entire culture by money. It is easy to become discouraged observing this, especially since this is what the press and television insist that we look at, and nothing more.

But there is also (though much of this is kept from us, to keep us intimidated and without hope) the bubbling of change under the surface of obedience: the growing revulsion against the endless wars (I think of the Russian women in the nineties, demanding their country end its military intervention in Chechnya, as did Americans during the Vietnam war); the insistence of women all over the world that they will no longer tolerate abuse and subordination—we see, for instance, the new international movement against female genital mutilation, and the militancy of welfare mothers against punitive laws. There is civil disobedience against the military machine, protest against police brutality directed especially at people of color.

In the United States, we see the educational system, a burgeoning new literature, alternative radio stations, a wealth of documentary films outside the mainstream, even Hollywood itself and sometimes television—compelled to recognize the growing multiracial character of the nation. Yes, we have in this country, dominated by corporate wealth and military power and two antiquated political parties, what a fearful conservative characterized as "a permanent adversarial culture" challenging the present, demanding a new future.

It is a race in which we can all choose to participate, or just to watch. But we should know that our choice will help determine the outcome.

I think of the words of the poet Shelley, recited by women garment workers in New York to one another at the start of the twentieth century.

Rise like lions after slumber
In unvanquishable number!
Shake your chains to earth, like
dew
Which in sleep had fallen on you—
Ye are many; they are few!

§16. The Basic Structure as Subject: Second Kind of Reason

16.1. The second kind of reason for taking the basic structure as the primary subject derives from its profound and pervasive influence on the persons who live under its institutions. Recall that in explaining the emphasis put on the basic structure as subject, we said that we view citizens as born into society: it is there that they will lead a complete life. They enter that social world only by birth, leave it only by death. And since any modern society, even a well-ordered one, must rely on some inequalities to be well designed and effectively organized, we ask what kinds of inequalities a well-ordered society would allow or be particularly concerned to avoid.

Justice as fairness focuses on inequalities in citizens' life-prospects—their prospects over a complete life (as specified by an appropriate index of primary goods)—as these prospects are affected by three kinds of contingencies:

- (a) their social class of origin: the class into which they are born and develop before the age of reason;
- (b) their native endowments (as opposed to their realized endowments); and their opportunities to develop these endowments as affected by their social class of origin;
- (c) their good or ill fortune, or good or bad luck, over the course of life (how they are affected by illness and accident; and, say, by periods of involuntary unemployment and regional economic decline).

Even in a well-ordered society, then, our prospects over life are deeply affected by social, natural, and fortuitous contingencies, and by the way the basic structure, by setting up inequalities, uses those contingencies to meet certain social purposes.

Pointing out these three kinds of contingencies is not enough, of course, to show conclusively that the basic structure is the appropriate subject of political justice. No such decisive arguments are available, as everything de-

21. See *Theory*, §12: 69, though the point is not stated sufficiently sharply.

depends on how the conception of justice as fairness hangs together as a whole. Yet if we ignore the inequalities in people's prospects in life arising from these contingencies and let those inequalities work themselves out while failing to institute the regulations necessary to preserve background justice, we would not be taking seriously the idea of society as a fair system of cooperation between citizens as free and equal. This reminds us that what we are asking is precisely: what principles of background justice are presupposed in taking seriously that idea of society (§12.1)?

1 a changing world

Do Our Fellow Citizens Always Come First?

Consider two aspects of globalization: first, the ability of people living in Afghanistan, Iraq, or Yemen to bring sudden death and terror to New York, London, Madrid, Paris, and Sydney; and second, the emission of greenhouse gases from power stations, vehicles, and even cattle. The former leaves unforgettable images that are watched on television screens all over the world; the other causes changes to the climate of our planet in ways that can be detected only by scientific instruments. Yet both are indications of the way in which we are now one world, and the more subtle changes to which our vehicle exhausts contribute are already killing far more people than the highly visible deeds of terrorists.

Over the decades since the 1980s, as scientists piled up the evidence that continuing greenhouse gas emissions will imperil hundreds of millions, perhaps billions, of lives, state leaders struggled to agree on a plan for making sufficient cuts in those

emissions to prevent a serious risk of climate becoming catastrophic, although such a plan would clearly be in the interests of the world as a whole. As we shall see later in this book, even the agreement reached in Paris in 2015 does not do enough.

The lack of the necessary global perspective was never better illustrated than by George W. Bush. As president of the United States, the country that has, by its emissions over the past century, done more than any other to make climate change a problem, he said, “We will not do anything that harms our economy, because first things first are the people who live in America.”¹ That remark was not an aberration but an expression of an ethical view that too many political leaders take for granted. His father, the first President George Bush, had said much the same thing at the 1992 Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro. When representatives of developing countries asked the president to put on the agenda the overconsumption of resources by the developed countries, especially the United States, George H. W. Bush said, “The American lifestyle is not up for negotiation.” It was not negotiable, apparently, even if maintaining this lifestyle will lead to the deaths of millions of people subject to increasingly unpredictable weather and the loss of land used by tens of millions more people because of rising ocean levels and local flooding.²

But it is not only the two Bush administrations that put the interests of Americans first. In the early 1990s, in the context of the debate over whether to intervene in Bosnia to stop Serb “ethnic cleansing” operations directed against Bosnian Muslims, Colin Powell, then chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff under President Bill Clinton, quoted with approval Otto von Bismarck’s remark that all the Balkans were not worth the bones of a single one of his soldiers.³ Bismarck, however, was not thinking of intervening in the Balkans to stop crimes against humanity. As chancellor of Imperial Germany, he assumed that his country

followed its national interest. To use his remark as an argument against humanitarian intervention was to return to nineteenth-century power politics, ignoring both the bloody wars that style of politics brought about in the first half of the twentieth century and the efforts in the second half of the twentieth century to find a better foundation for peace and the prevention of crimes against humanity.

In Kosovo, though the Clinton administration's policy of giving absolute priority to American lives did not prevent intervention to defend the Kosovars, it led to the restriction of intervention to aerial bombardment. This strategy was a total success: NATO forces suffered not a single casualty in combat. Approximately 300 Kosovar, 209 Serb, and three Chinese civilians were killed. President Barack Obama used a similar "air power only" strategy against the Islamic State, or ISIS, after 2014, when it was threatening to overrun Iraq. Again, this strategy avoids American casualties, but, as Ivan Eland pointed out, "If the U.S. uses only air power, ISIS will eventually hide in the cities and the U.S. will be faced with causing a lot of civilian casualties to get the group out or kill its fighters."⁴

Observing the American reliance on airpower to protect the people of Kosovo, Timothy Garton Ash wrote, "It is a perverted moral code that will allow a million innocent civilians of another race to be made destitute because you are not prepared to risk the life of a single professional soldier of your own." This does not mean that putting "boots on the ground" is always a good thing to do: the American invasion of Iraq in 2003 brought about the regional chaos in which ISIS has thrived. It also, according to an estimate by researchers at Johns Hopkins University, caused 654,000 more Iraqi deaths than would have been expected under prewar conditions.⁵ Nevertheless, Ash's comment raises a fundamental ethical issue: to what extent should political leaders see

their role as limited to promoting the interests of their citizens, and to what extent should they be concerned with the welfare of people everywhere?

As Ash suggests, there is a strong ethical case for saying that it is wrong for leaders to give absolute priority to the interests of their own citizens. The value of the life of an innocent human being does not vary according to nationality. But, it might be said, the abstract ethical idea that all humans are entitled to equal consideration cannot govern the duties of a political leader. Just as parents are expected to provide for the interests of their children rather than for the interests of strangers, so too anyone accepting the office of president of the United States takes on a specific role that makes it his or her duty to protect and further the interests of Americans. Other countries have their leaders, with similar roles in respect of the interests of their fellow citizens. There is no world government, and as long as that situation prevails, we must have sovereign states, and the leaders of those states must give preference to the interests of their citizens. Otherwise, unless electors were suddenly to turn into altruists of a kind never before seen on a large scale, democracy could not function. American voters would not elect a president who gave no more weight to their interests than he or she gave to the interests of Iraqis or Afghans. Our leaders feel they must give some degree of priority to the interests of their own citizens, and they are, so this argument runs, right to do so.

Beyond a World of Sovereign States

Is the division of the world into sovereign states a dominant and unalterable fact of life? Here our thinking has been affected by the horrors of Bosnia, Rwanda, and Kosovo. In Rwanda, a United Nations inquiry took the view that 2,500 military personnel, given the proper training and mandate, might have

saved 800,000 lives.⁶ Kofi Annan, who, as UN under-secretary-general for peacekeeping operations at the time, must bear some responsibility for what the inquiry termed a “terrible and humiliating” paralysis, learned from this situation, and when he became secretary-general, urged that “the world cannot stand aside when gross and systematic violations of human rights are taking place.” What we need, he said, are “legitimate and universal principles” on which we can base intervention.⁷ Subsequently, as we shall see in more detail in chapter 4, the United Nations World Summit unanimously accepted that the world community has a responsibility to protect the citizens of any state from genocide, ethnic cleansing, war crimes, and crimes against humanity, even if this means military intervention against a government that is carrying out such crimes within its own territory. The British historian Martin Gilbert called the acceptance of this responsibility “the most significant adjustment to sovereignty in 360 years”—in other words, since the Treaty of Westphalia ended the Thirty Years’ War in Europe and established the principle of state sovereignty and nonintervention in the affairs of other states in 1648.⁸

How Terrorism Has Weakened State Sovereignty

In a very different manner, the aftermath of the terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon in 2001 underlined the extent to which our thinking about state sovereignty has changed over the past century. More than a century ago, in the summer of 1914, another act of terrorism shocked the world: the assassination by a Bosnian Serb nationalist of Crown Prince Franz Ferdinand of Austria and his wife in Sarajevo. In the wake of that outrage Austria-Hungary presented an ultimatum to Serbia in which it laid out the evidence that the assassins were trained and armed by the Black Hand, a shadowy Serbian organization

headed by the chief of Serbian military intelligence. The Black Hand was tolerated or supported by Serbian government officials who arranged safe passage across the border into Bosnia for the seven conspirators in the assassination plot.⁹ Accordingly, Austria-Hungary's ultimatum demanded that the Serbs bring those responsible to justice and allow Austro-Hungarian officials to inspect the files to ensure that this had been done properly.

Despite the clear evidence of the involvement of Serbian officials in the crime—evidence that, historians agree, was substantially accurate—the ultimatum Austria-Hungary presented to Serbia was widely condemned in Russia, France, Britain, and the United States. “The most formidable document I have ever seen addressed by one State to another that was independent,” the British foreign minister, Sir Edward Grey, called it.¹⁰ The American Legion's official history of the Great War used less diplomatic language, referring to the ultimatum as a “vicious document of unproven accusation and tyrannical demand.”¹¹ Many historians studying the origins of the First World War have condemned the Austro-Hungarian ultimatum, saying that it demanded more than one sovereign state may properly ask of another. They have added that the Austro-Hungarian refusal to negotiate after the Serbian government accepted many, but not all, of its demands is further evidence that Austria-Hungary, together with its backer, Germany, wanted an excuse to declare war on Serbia. Hence they must bear the guilt for the outbreak of the war and the nine million deaths that followed.

Now consider the American response to the 2001 terrorist attacks which were orchestrated by Al Qaeda, then based in Afghanistan. The demands made of the Taliban government of Afghanistan by the Bush administration in 2001 were scarcely less stringent than those put to Serbia in 1914. (The main differ-

ence is that the Austro-Hungarians insisted on the suppression of hostile nationalist propaganda. Freedom of speech was not so widely regarded, then, as a human right. The United States, with its strong constitutional protection of freedom of speech, could hardly demand that the Taliban do something that would be unconstitutional in the United States.) Yet the American demands, far from being condemned as a mere pretext for aggressive war, were endorsed as reasonable and justifiable by a wide-ranging coalition of states. When President George W. Bush said, in speeches and press conferences after September 11, 2001, that he would not draw a distinction between terrorists and regimes that harbor terrorists, no ambassadors, foreign ministers, or United Nations representatives denounced this as a “vicious” doctrine or a “tyrannical” demand on other sovereign states. The Security Council broadly endorsed it in its resolution of September 28, 2001.¹² It seems that world leaders now accept that every state has an obligation to every other state to suppress activities within its borders that might lead to terrorist attacks carried out in other countries, and that it is reasonable to go to war with a state that does not do so. That is a sign of how far the world has moved in the direction of becoming a global community.

The Bosnian Serb conspirators had only to slip across the border between Serbia and Bosnia in order to reach their target, but terrorism is no longer local or even regional. The Al Qaeda terrorists who flew planes into the World Trade Center and the Pentagon traveled much further (most of them were citizens of Saudi Arabia), and ISIS has been promoting terrorism over the internet, encouraging its adherents to carry out attacks in the countries in which they live. Similarly, in 2015 the civil war in Syria became a problem for all of Europe, as immigrants crossed to Greece and made their way up through Europe.

Shortly before the attacks of September 11 a United Nations panel issued a report pointing out that even if there were no altruistic concern among the rich to help the world's poor, their own self-interest should lead them to do so:

In the global village, someone else's poverty very soon becomes one's own problem: of lack of markets for one's products, illegal immigration, pollution, contagious disease, insecurity, fanaticism, terrorism.¹³

Thus the combination of terrorism, mass international travel, and the internet has made our world an integrated community in a new and frightening way. Not merely the activities of our neighbors but also those of the inhabitants of the most remote mountain valleys of the farthest-flung countries of our planet are now potentially threatening, and so have become our concern. We need to extend the reach of the criminal law there and to have the means to bring terrorists to justice without declaring war on an entire country in order to do so. For this we need a sound global system of criminal justice, so justice does not become the victim of national differences of opinion. We also need, though it will be even more difficult to achieve, a sense that we really are one community, that we are people who recognize not only the force of prohibitions against killing each other but also the pull of obligations to assist one another. This may not stop fanatics from carrying out suicide missions, but it will help to isolate them and reduce their support. It was not a coincidence that just two weeks after September 11, 2001, conservative members of the United States Congress abandoned their opposition to the payment of \$582 million in back dues that the United States owed to the United Nations.¹⁴ When America was calling for the world to come to its aid to stamp out terrorism, it became apparent that America could no longer flout the rules

of the global community to the extent that it had been doing before that fateful September morning.

A New Era for Ethics and Political Theory

Implicit in the term “globalization” rather than the older “internationalization” is the idea that we are moving beyond the era of growing ties between states and are beginning to contemplate something more than the existing conception of state sovereignty. But this change needs to be reflected in all levels of our thought, especially in our thinking about ethics and our political theory.

To see how much our thinking about ethics needs to change, consider the work that, better than any other, represents late twentieth-century thinking on justice in the liberal American establishment: John Rawls’s *A Theory of Justice*. When I read it, shortly after its publication in 1971, I was astonished that a book with that title, nearly 600 pages long, could utterly fail to discuss the injustice of the extremes of wealth and poverty that exist between societies. Rawls’s method is to seek the nature of justice by asking what principles people would choose if they were choosing in conditions that prevented them from knowing what position they themselves would occupy. That is, they must choose without knowing whether they themselves would be rich or poor, a member of the dominant ethnic majority or of an ethnic minority, a religious believer or an atheist, highly skilled or unskilled, and so on. If we were to apply this method globally rather than for a given society it would immediately be obvious that one fact about which those making the choice should be ignorant is whether they are citizens of a rich country such as the United States or of a poor country such as Haiti. In setting up his original position, however, Rawls simply assumes that the people making the choice all belong to the same

society and are choosing principles to achieve justice *within* their society. Hence when he argues that people choosing under the conditions he prescribes would choose a principle that, subject to constraints intended to protect equal liberty and fair equality of opportunity, seeks to improve the position of the worst-off, he limits the conception of worst-off to those within one's own society. If he accepted that to choose justly, people must also be ignorant of their citizenship, his theory would become a forceful argument for improving the prospects of the worst-off people in the world. But in the most influential work on justice written in twentieth-century America, this question *never even arises*.¹⁵ Rawls addressed it, late in his life, in a short book, *The Law of Peoples*, and I shall say something later about what he says there. His approach, however, remains firmly based on the idea that the unit for deciding what is just remains something like today's nation-state.

Rawls's model is that of an international order, not a global order. Most political theorists today still make that assumption, but there is now a growing minority who take a global perspective. Yael Tamir, who, having served in the Israeli parliament and as a government minister, cannot be dismissed as a mere academic remote from political reality, has called for political theorists to dare to ask the fundamental question: "Should the unity and autonomy of the sovereign state be retained, or should the state be transcended for some purposes and divided for others?"¹⁶ Political theorists are now asking that question. As David Held and Pietro Maffettone point out in their preface to a collection of essays by leading scholars working on global political theory, the acceleration of globalization since the 1980s fundamentally challenges the idea that normative political ideas can be confined to the internal life of states. Their volume is evidence that political theory is responding to this challenge and changing its nature as it does so.¹⁷

Technology Changes (Almost) Everything

For most of the eons of human existence, people living only short distances apart may as well, for all the difference they made to each other's lives, have been living in separate worlds. A river, a mountain range, a stretch of forest or desert, a sea—these were enough to cut people off from each other. Over the past few centuries the isolation has dwindled, slowly at first, then with increasing rapidity. Now people living on opposite sides of the world are linked in ways previously unimaginable.

One hundred and fifty years ago Karl Marx gave a one-sentence summary of his theory of history:

The handmill gives you society with the feudal lord; the steam mill, society with the industrial capitalist.¹⁸

Today he might have added:

The jet plane, the telephone, and the internet give you a global society with the transnational corporation and the World Trade Organization.

Technology changes everything—that was Marx's claim, and if it was a dangerous half truth, it was still an illuminating one. As technology has overcome distance, economic globalization has followed. Planes can bring fresh vegetables from Kenya to compete in London supermarkets alongside those from nearby Kent. In the wrong hands, those planes can also become lethal weapons that bring down tall buildings. Instant digital communication spreads the nature of international trade from physical objects to skilled services. At the end of a day's trading, a bank based in New York may have its accounts balanced by clerks living in India. The increasing degree to which there is a single world economy is reflected in the development of new forms of global governance, the most controversial of which has been the

World Trade Organization, but the WTO is not itself the creator of the global economy.

Global market forces provide incentives for every country to put on what Thomas Friedman has called “a Golden Straitjacket,” a set of policies that involve freeing up the private sector of the economy, shrinking the bureaucracy, keeping inflation low, and removing restrictions on foreign investment. If a country refuses to wear the Golden Straitjacket or tries to take it off, then the Electronic Herd—the currency traders, stock and bond traders, and those who make investment decisions for multinational corporations—could gallop off in a different direction, taking with it the investment capital that countries want to keep their economy growing. When capital is internationally mobile, to raise your tax rates is to risk triggering a flight of capital to other countries with comparable investment prospects and lower taxation. The upshot is that as the economy grows and average incomes rise, the scope of politics may shrink—at least as long as no political party is prepared to challenge the assumption that global capitalism is the best economic system. When neither the government nor the opposition is prepared to take the risk of removing the Golden Straitjacket, the differences between the major political parties shrink to differences over minor ways in which the straitjacket might be adjusted.¹⁹ Thus even without the WTO, the growth of the global economy itself marks a decline in the power of the nation-state. (The difficulty of challenging international economic arrangements was vividly demonstrated by the gap between the antiausterity rhetoric used by the Greek leftist party Syriza in its January 2015 election campaign and the actions taken by Syriza in government when faced with an ultimatum from Greece’s creditors.)

Marx argued that in the long run we never reject advances in the means by which we satisfy our material needs. Hence history

is driven by the growth of productive forces. He would have been contemptuous of the suggestion that globalization is something foisted on the world by a conspiracy of corporate executives meeting at the World Economic Forum in Davos, and he might have agreed with Friedman's remark that the most basic truth about globalization is, "*No one is in charge.*"²⁰ For Marx, however, the significance of this statement is not that conspiracy theorists are wrong—though he would have agreed that they are wrong—but that we are living in an alienated world in which, instead of ruling ourselves, we are ruled by our own creation, the global economy. For Friedman, on the other hand, all that needs to be said about Marx's alternative—state control of the economy—is that *it doesn't work.*²¹

Marx also believed that a society's ethic is a reflection of the economic structure to which its technology has given rise. Thus a feudal economy in which serfs are tied to their lord's land gives you the ethic of feudal chivalry based on the loyalty of knights and vassals to their lord and the obligations of the lord to protect them in time of war. A capitalist economy requires a mobile labor force able to meet the needs of the market, so it breaks the tie between lord and vassal, substituting an ethic in which the right to buy and sell labor is paramount. Our newly interdependent global society, with its remarkable possibilities for linking people around the planet, gives us the material basis for a new ethic. Marx would have thought that such an ethic will serve the interests of the ruling class, that is, the rich countries and the transnational corporations they have spawned.

Marx wanted to bring our ethical judgments down to earth. They did not, he thought, come from God or from reason but from the economic basis of our society and the means we use to produce the goods we consume. He did not consider a different earthly possibility: that our ethical judgments have a biological

basis in our origins as social mammals. The intuitive responses by which we judge many things to be right or wrong have their origins in the behavior and feelings of our human and pre-human ancestors and were suited for life in a small group in which everyone knew everyone else. That is very far from the world in which we live today, but many of our deepest moral intuitions persist.²² One of the themes of this book will be the way in which they need to change if we are to overcome the problems the world faces.

The fact that many of our moral intuitions stem from our ancestors' need to survive and reproduce in the conditions in which they lived does not mean that our reasoning abilities are powerless to reshape our ethics. If the group to which we must justify ourselves is the tribe or the nation, then our morality is likely to be tribal or national. If, however, the revolution in communications has created a global audience, we may feel a need to justify our behavior to the whole world. That is the approach to ethics that frames the chapters that follow.²³

It would be naïve to believe that the existence of the internet and the enhanced possibilities of communication across national boundaries that come with it would be sufficient to bring about a new ethic that will serve the interests of all those who live on this planet in a way that, despite much rhetoric, no previous ethic has ever done. The second decade of the twenty-first century has seen a resurgence of nationalism in China, resulting in disputes with Japan, Vietnam, and the Philippines over the ownership of small islands in the East and South China Seas. Similarly, in Russia stronger nationalism led to the occupation of Crimea and support for pro-Russian rebels in eastern Ukraine. Nevertheless, the existence of a global audience and a global discussion would seem to be a necessary, though not sufficient, condition for a truly global ethic.

If this appeal to our need for ethical justification appears to be based on too generous a view of human nature and of the ability of reasoning to influence our ethical judgments and our behavior, there is another consideration of a very different kind that leads in the same direction. The great empires of the past, whether Persian, Roman, Chinese, or British, were, as long as their power lasted, able to keep their major cities safe from the threat of those they considered barbarians on the frontiers of their far-flung realms. The Persians and Romans kept them out by the strength of their armies; the British prevailed by their supremacy on the seas; and the Chinese built the Great Wall. In the twenty-first century the greatest superpower in history was unable to keep the self-appointed warriors of a different world-view from attacking both its financial center and its capital. The thesis of this book is that how well we come through the era of globalization (perhaps whether we come through it at all) will depend on how we respond ethically to the idea that we live in one world. For the rich countries not to take a global ethical viewpoint has long been seriously morally wrong. Now it is also, in the long term, a danger to their security.

obligation of this kind, though one that is attenuated by the size of the community and the lack of direct contact between or even bare knowledge of other members of the community. But it can be important to build and maintain a sense of community, and this is sufficient reason for giving some priority to aiding one's fellow citizens ahead of citizens of other countries. This priority should, however, be balanced against the amount of good that our aid will do.

The Imagined Community

If reciprocity alone is not enough to show why we have a significantly stronger obligation to our fellow citizens than to anyone else, one might try to supplement this idea by recourse to Benedict Anderson's account of a nation as an "imagined political community," one that lives only in the minds of those who see themselves as citizens of the same nation.²⁶ Though citizens never encounter most of the other members of the nation, they think of themselves as sharing an allegiance to common institutions and values, such as a constitution, democratic procedures, principles of toleration, the separation of church and state, and the rule of law. The imagined community makes up for the lack of a real, face-to-face community in which there would be personal ties and more concrete obligations of reciprocity. Acknowledging special obligations to other members of the nation can then be seen as part of what it takes to form and maintain this imagined community.

Anderson's conception of nationalism is an account of how the idea of belonging to a nation took hold in the modern world. Because it is a description and not a prescription, it cannot ground a moral argument for the importance of maintaining the imagined communities that he describes. It is nevertheless an illuminating account, precisely because it shows that the modern

idea that we owe special loyalty to our national community is not based on a community that exists independently of the way we think about ourselves. If Anderson is right, and the modern idea of the nation rests on a community we imagine ourselves to be part of rather than one that we really are part of, then it is also possible for us to imagine ourselves to be part of a different community. That fits well with the view I have defended in each chapter of this book: the complex set of developments we refer to as globalization should lead us to reconsider the moral significance we currently place on national boundaries. We need to ask whether it will, in the long run, be better if we continue to live in the imagined communities we know as nation-states or if we become more open to the idea that we are members of an imagined community of the world. I have already offered several arguments for the latter view. Our problems are now too intertwined to be well resolved in a system consisting of nation-states, in which citizens give their primary, near-exclusive loyalty to their own nation-state rather than to the larger global community. Moreover, such a system has not led to a morally adequate response to the pressing needs of those living in extreme poverty. Imagining ourselves to be part of a national community seems fine when we think of it as broadening our concerns beyond more limited tribal loyalties, but it is less appealing when we think of it as erecting fences against the rest of the world.

An Argument from Efficiency

Robert Goodin defends a system of special obligations to our compatriots “as an administrative device for discharging our general duties more efficiently.”²⁷ If you are sick and in hospital, Goodin argues, it is best to have a particular doctor made responsible for your care rather than leaving it up to all the hospital doctors in general; so too, he says, it is best to have one state