



ON AMERICAN PATRIOTISM

"Citizens by birth or choice of a common country, that country has a right to concentrate your affections. The name of American, which belongs to you, in your national capacity, must always exalt the just pride of patriotism, more than any appellation derived from local discriminations." --George Washington

The ideal of "patriotism" evokes different concepts of what it means to be patriotic, but for most, patriotism equates with "love of country," and some degree of nationalism.



Generations of American Patriots

In regard to our Republic, Thomas Jefferson advised, "Love your neighbor as yourself and your country more than yourself."

Of course, Jefferson and our Founders understood that [American Patriotism](#) was (and remains) something quite apart from obedient loyalty to the state or its sovereigns. Jefferson's "country" represented the eternal struggle for liberty over tyranny.

In 1775, the English author and lexicographer Samuel Johnson, a Tory loyalist, wrote that American Patriots' quest for liberty was nothing more than "the delirious dream of republican fanaticism" which would "put the axe to the roots of all government."

Johnson concluded famously, "Patriotism is the last refuge of a scoundrel." The consummate cynic Ambrose Bierce would later counter, "I beg to submit that it is the first."

Unlike King George's partisans, however, American Patriots were unwaveringly loyal to something much larger than a mere man or geo-political institution. They pledged their [sacred honor](#) in support of Essential Liberty as "[endowed by our creator](#)" and enshrined in our Declaration of Independence and its subordinate guidance, our Constitution.

During the same year Johnson was denigrating American Patriotism, Founder Alexander Hamilton was aptly defining its basis in America: "To grant that there is a supreme intelligence who rules the world and has established laws to regulate the actions of his creatures; and still to assert that man, in a state of nature, may be considered as perfectly free from all restraints of law and government, appears to a common understanding altogether irreconcilable. Good and wise men, in all ages, have embraced a very dissimilar theory. They have supposed that the deity, from the relations we stand in to himself and to each other, has constituted an eternal and immutable law, which is indispensably obligatory upon all mankind, prior to any human institution whatever. This is what is called the law of nature."

Hamilton continued: "Upon this law depends the natural rights of mankind: the Supreme Being gave existence to man, together with the means of preserving and beatifying that existence. He endowed him with rational faculties, by the help of which, to discern and pursue such things, as were consistent with his duty and interest, and invested him with an inviolable right to personal Liberty, and personal safety. The Sacred Rights of Mankind are not to be rummaged for, among old parchments, or musty records. They are written, as with a sun beam, in the whole volume of human nature, by the Hand of the Divinity itself; and can never be erased or obscured by mortal power."

Our Founders declared "that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights," and they constituted this affirmation in order to "secure the blessings of Liberty to ourselves and our posterity."

George Washington encouraged "the just pride of patriotism" but warned of those who would misrepresent their love for country in an effort to advance other less noble ends: "Guard against the impostures of pretended patriotism."

Washington also understood that Liberty was the gift of God, not government, and in his farewell address, he notes concern that in a future day, this order of Liberty could be lost: "Let it simply be asked where is the security for property, for reputation, for life, if the sense of religious obligation desert the oaths. ... Whatever may be conceded to the influence of refined education on minds of peculiar structure, reason and experience both forbid us to expect that National morality can prevail in exclusion of religious principle."

Washington's successor, John Adams, asserted, "Liberty must at all hazards be supported. We have a right to it, derived from our Maker. But if we had not, our fathers have earned and bought it for us, at the expense of their ease, their estates, their pleasure, and their blood."

Note, however, what Adams proclaimed: Liberty must be supported at all costs, but not so the state. Indeed, American Patriotism is rooted in defiance of the state when it becomes oppressive to [Essential Liberty](#). Our Constitution enshrines this Liberty, about which Adams warned, "A Constitution of Government once changed from Freedom, can never be restored. Liberty, once lost, is lost forever."

American Patriots must, therefore, in the words of Patrick Henry, "Guard with jealous attention the public Liberty. Suspect every one who approaches that jewel. Unfortunately, nothing will preserve it but downright force. Whenever you give up that force, you are inevitably ruined."

That jealous devotion to Liberty is the inspiration for the recent [grassroots resurgence](#) of Patriots across our nation, those for whom "[the name of American](#)" does, indeed, "exalt the just pride of patriotism, more than any appellation derived from local discriminations."

These "[right-wingers](#)," as [Barack Hussein Obama](#) calls us, are devoted to something much larger than self, which is why our motives are such a mystery to Obama and his egocentric disciples.

Indeed, we are devoted to [First Principles](#), as outlined in our [Patriot Declaration](#).

Our steadfast support for Liberty and limited government is diametrically opposed to the socialist manifesto of the [Democrat Party](#), framed by [Franklin Delano Roosevelt](#) and renewed by every Democrat president since.

Their statist doctrines are an utter affront to the Essential Liberty promoted by the Democrat Party's claimed Founder, Thomas Jefferson.

In his landmark 1962 treatise on Liberty, "Capitalism and Freedom," economist [Milton Friedman](#) challenged a famous quote posited by the modern Democrat Party's most cherished icon, John Kennedy (as lifted from the Roman statesman, Cicero).

"Kennedy said, 'Ask not what your country can do for you -- ask what you can do for your country.' Neither half of the statement expresses a relation between the citizen and his government that is worthy of the ideals of free men in a free society. The paternalistic 'what your country can do for you' implies that the government is the patron, the citizen the ward, a view that is at odds with the free man's belief in his own responsibility for his own destiny. The organismic, 'what you can do for your country' implies that the government is the master or the deity, the citizen, the servant or the votary. To the free man, the country is the collection of individuals who compose it, not something over and above them... [H]e regards government as a means, an instrumentality, neither a

grantor of favors and gifts, nor a master or god to be blindly worshipped and served."

Friedman concluded, "The free man will ask neither what his country can do for him nor what he can do for his country. He will ask rather 'What can I and my compatriots do through government' to ... advance our several goals and purposes, and above all, to protect our freedom? And he will accompany this question with another: How can we keep the government we create from becoming a Frankenstein that will destroy the very freedom we establish it to protect?"

In the nearly 50 years since Friedman penned that last question, our central government has become something far more menacing and sinister than The Modern Prometheus (a.k.a. Frankenstein) in Mary

Shelley's classic novel, something no longer constrained by our Constitution and Rule of Law. In this respect, [Obama's template](#) for government growth foretells the end of Liberty.

Fortunately, American Patriots will not stand idly by and allow the last vestiges of Liberty to devolve into tyranny. In Jefferson's words, "Honor, justice, and humanity, forbid us tamely to surrender that freedom which we received from our gallant ancestors, and which our innocent posterity have a right to receive from us. We cannot endure the infamy and guilt of resigning succeeding generations to that wretchedness which inevitably awaits them if we basely entail hereditary bondage on them."