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stronger faction can readily unite and oppress the weaker, anarchy may as truly be said to reign as in a state of nature, where the weaker individual is not secured against the violence of the stronger; and as, in the latter state, even the stronger individuals are prompted, by the uncertainty of their condition, to submit to a government which may protect the weak as well as themselves; so, in the former state, will the more powerful factions or parties be gradually induced, by a like motive, to wish for a government which will protect all parties, the weaker as well as the more powerful.

Questions

1. What is the purpose of Madison's analogy between political liberty and religious liberty?
2. How does Madison argue that a large republic is more conducive to liberty than a small one?



41. Patrick Henry's Anti-Federalist Argument (1788)

Source: Patrick Henry: "Anti-Federalist Argument" from The Complete Anti-Federalist Volume 1, pp. 285-90, edited by Herbert J. Storing. Copyright © The University of Chicago Press. Reprinted by permission of The University of Chicago Press.

Opponents of the ratification of the Constitution, called Anti-Federalists, insisted that the document shifted the balance between liberty and power too far in the direction of the latter. They predicted that the new government would fall under the sway of wealthy Americans hostile to the liberties of ordinary folk. Popular self-government, they claimed, flourished best in small communities, where rulers and ruled interacted daily.

Among the leaders of the movement for independence who opposed ratification of the Constitution, few were as eloquent as Patrick Henry. In

June 1788 he unsuccessfully implored the Virginia convention called to consider ratification to reject the document, arguing that it would create a "consolidated" national government that would suppress Americans' liberties and completely overshadow the governments of the states.

AN OPINION HAS gone forth, we find, that we are a contemptible people: The time has been when we were thought otherwise: Under this same despised Government, we commanded the respect of all Europe: Wherefore are we now reckoned otherwise? The American spirit has fled from hence: It has gone to regions, where it has never been expected: It has gone to the people of France in search of a splendid Government—a strong energetic Government. Shall we imitate the example of those nations who have gone from a simple to a splendid Government? Are those nations more worthy of our imitation? What can make an adequate satisfaction to them for the loss they suffered in attaining such a Government for the loss of their liberty? If we admit this Consolidated Government it will be because we like a great splendid one. Some way or other we must be a great and mighty empire; we must have an army, and a navy, and a number of things: When the American spirit was in its youth, the language of America was different: Liberty, Sir, was then the primary object. We are descended from a people whose Government was founded on liberty: Our glorious forefathers of Great-Britain, made liberty the foundation of every thing. That country is become a great, mighty, and splendid nation; not because their Government is strong and energetic; but, Sir, because liberty is its direct end and foundation: We drew the spirit of liberty from our British ancestors; by that spirit we have triumphed over every difficulty.

But now, Sir, the American spirit, assisted by the ropes and chains of consolidation, is about to convert this country to a powerful and mighty empire: If you make the citizens of this country agree to become the subjects of one great consolidated empire of America, your Government will not have sufficient energy to keep them

together: Such a Government is incompatible with the genius of republicanism: There will be no checks, no real balances, in this Government: What can avail your specious imaginary balances, your rope-dancing, chain-rattling, ridiculous ideal checks and contrivances? But, Sir, we are not feared by foreigners: we do not make nations tremble: Would this, Sir, constitute happiness, or secure liberty? I trust, Sir, our political hemisphere will ever direct their operations to the security of those objects. Consider our situation, Sir: Go to the poor man, ask him what he does; he will inform you, that he enjoys the fruits of his labour, under his own fig-tree, with his wife and children around him, in peace and security. Go to every other member of the society, you will find the same tranquil ease and content; you will find no alarms or disturbances: Why then tell us of dangers to terrify us into an adoption of this new Government? and yet who knows the dangers that this new system may produce; they are out of the sight of the common people: They cannot foresee latent consequences: I dread the operation of it on the middling and lower class of people: It is for them I fear the adoption of this system.

We are told that this Government collectively taken, is without an example—That it is national in this part, and federal in that part, &c. We may be amused if we please, by a treatise of political anatomy. In the brain it is national: The stamina are federal—some limbs are federal—others national. The Senators are voted for by the State Legislatures, so far it is federal.—Individuals choose the members of the first branch; here it is national. It is federal in conferring general powers; but national in retaining them. It is not to be supported by the States—The pockets of individuals are to be searched for its maintenance. What signifies it to me, that you have the most curious anatomical description of it in its creation? To all the common purposes of Legislation it is a great consolidation of Government. You are not to have a right to legislate in any but trivial cases: You are not to touch private contracts: You are not to have the right of having arms in your own defence: You cannot be trusted with dealing out justice between man and man. What shall the States have to do? Take care of the

poor—repair and make highways—erect bridges, and so on, and so on. Abolish the State Legislatures at once. What purposes should they be continued for? Our Legislature will indeed be a ludicrous spectacle—180 men marching in solemn farcical procession, exhibiting a mournful proof of the lost liberty of their country—without the power of restoring it. But, Sir, we have the consolation that it is a mixed Government: That is, it may work sorely on your neck; but you will have some comfort by saying, that it was a Federal Government in its origin.

I beg Gentlemen to consider—lay aside your prejudices—Is this a Federal Government? Is it not a Consolidated Government for every purpose almost? Is the Government of Virginia a State Government after this Government is adopted? I grant that it is a Republican Government—but for what purposes? For such trivial domestic considerations, as render it unworthy the name of a Legislature.

The State Governments, says he, will possess greater advantages than the General Government, and will consequently prevail. His opinion and mine are diametrically opposite. Bring forth the Federal allurements, and compare them with the poor contemptible things that the State Legislatures can bring forth. On the part of the State Legislatures, there are Justices of Peace and militia officers—And even these Justices and officers, are bound by oath in favour of the Constitution. A constable is the only man who is not obliged to swear paramount allegiance to this beloved Congress. On the other hand, there are rich, fat Federal emoluments—your rich, snug, fine, fat Federal offices—The number of collectors of taxes and excises will outnumber any thing from the States. Who can cope with the excisemen and taxmen? There are none in this country, that can cope with this class of men alone. But, Sir, is this the only danger? Would to Heaven that it were. If we are to ask which will last the longest—the State or the General Government, you must take an army and a navy into the account. Lay these things together, and add to the enumeration the superior abilities of those who manage the General Government. Can then the State Governments look it in the face? You dare

not look it in the face now, when it is but an *embryo*. The influence of this Government will be such, that you never can get amendments; for if you propose alterations, you will affront them. Let the Honorable Gentleman consider all these things and say, whether the State Governments will last as long as the Federal Government.

Questions

1. What are Henry's most important objections to the new Constitution?
2. Why does Henry feel that a "consolidated" government is a danger to liberty?

42. A July Fourth Oration (1800)

Source: American Mercury (Hartford, Conn.), July 10, 1800.

From the earliest days of the new nation, July Fourth became a day of public commemoration. In 1800, a speaker whose name was not reported in the press delivered an Independence Day oration at Hartford, Connecticut. He celebrated the "universal principles" of the Declaration of Independence but chastised his fellow citizens for failing to live up to them fully. Like many other Americans, he rejoiced in the revolutions that, beginning in France, had swept parts of Europe, predicted further progress for the rights of man in years to come, and identified the American example as the catalyst for the spread of freedom overseas.

On the other hand, the speaker condemned slavery as a flagrant violation of American values and a source of shame for the nation, asking pointedly, "Declaration of Independence! Where art thou now?" He went on to urge that "our daughters" ought to enjoy the same rights as "our sons," an idea that had been put forth by a few writers in the 1790s but was quite unusual for the time. Overall, the speech offered both an illustration of American nationalism in the aftermath of the Revolution and a telling

we have a republican form of government, we must acquire a *republican mind*. We must be frugal, sober, industrious, self-dependent, privately and publicly hospitable. . . . We must eradicate national prejudices. . . . We must always remember that *men*, and not soil, constitute the state.

Questions

1. How does the speaker seek to persuade his audience of the evils of slavery?
 2. What does the speaker identify as the major reasons to celebrate American independence?
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43. Thomas Jefferson on Race and Slavery (1781)

Source: Thomas Jefferson, Notes on the State of Virginia (Philadelphia, 1788), pp. 145-53, 172-73.

No American of the revolutionary generation did more to shape prevailing views on race than Thomas Jefferson. His writings reflected a divided, even tortured mind. In *Notes on the State of Virginia*, written in 1781 and published a few years later, Jefferson ruminated on whether blacks should be considered inferior to whites. Although generally, Jefferson attributed different peoples' varying degrees of civilization to environmental factors, he concluded that what he considered blacks' inferiority was innate. Jefferson made clear that he understood that slavery violated the principles of the Declaration of Independence he had written. He looked forward to the day when slaves would be emancipated. But, he insisted, once freed, they must be removed from the United States. Blacks, in Jefferson's view, could never become equal members of the American nation.

MANY OF THE laws which were in force during the monarchy being relative merely to that form of government, or inculcating principles inconsistent with republicanism, the first assembly which met after the establishment of the commonwealth appointed a committee to revise the whole code. . . . The following are the most remarkable alterations proposed. . . .

To emancipate all slaves born after passing the act. The bill reported by the revisors does not itself contain this proposition; but an amendment containing it was prepared, to be offered the legislature whenever the bill should be taken up, and further directing, that they should continue with their parents to a certain age, then be brought up, at the public expence, to tillage, arts or sciences, according to their geniusses, till the females should be eighteen, and the males twenty-one years of age, when they should be colonized to such place as the circumstances of the time should render most proper, sending them out with arms, implements of household and of the handicraft arts, seeds, pairs of the useful domestic animals, &c. to declare them a free and independant people, and extend to them our alliance and protection, till they have acquired strength; and to send vessels to the other parts of the world for an equal number of white inhabitants; to induce whom to migrate hither, proper encouragements were to be proposed. It will probably be asked, Why not retain and incorporate the blacks into the state, and thus save the expence of supplying, by importation of white settlers, the vacancies they will leave? Deep rooted prejudices entertained by the whites; ten thousand recollections, by the blacks, of the injuries they have sustained; new provocations; the real distinctions which nature has made; and many other circumstances, will divide us into parties, and produce convulsions which will probably never end but in the extermination of one or the other race.

. . .

—To these objections, which are political, may be added others, which are physical and moral. The first difference which strikes us is that of colour. Whether the black of the negro resides in the

reticular membrane between the skin and scarf-skin, or in the scarf-skin itself; whether it proceeds from the colour of the blood, the colour of the bile, or from that of some other secretion, the difference is fixed in nature, and is as real as if its seat and cause were better known to us. And is this difference of no importance? Is it not the foundation of a greater or less share of beauty in the two races? Are not the fine mixtures of red and white, the expressions of every passion by greater or less suffusions of colour in the one, preferable to that eternal monotony, which reigns in the countenances, that immoveable veil of black which covers all the emotions of the other race? . . .

They seem to require less sleep. A black after hard labour through the day, will be induced by the slightest amusements to sit up till midnight, or later though knowing he must be out with the first dawn of the morning. They are at least as brave, and more adventuresome. But this may perhaps proceed from a want of forethought, which prevents their seeing a danger till it be present. When present, they do not go through it with more coolness or steadiness than the whites. They are more ardent after their female: but love seems with them to be more an eager desire, than a tender delicate mixture of sentiment and sensation. Their griefs are transient. Those numberless afflictions, which render it doubtful whether heaven has given life to us in mercy or in wrath, are less felt, and sooner forgotten with them. In general, their existence appears to participate more of sensation than reflection. . . .

—The opinion, that they are inferior in the faculties of reason and imagination, must be hazarded with great diffidence. To justify a general conclusion, requires many observations, even where the subject may be submitted to the anatomical knife, to optical glasses, to analysis by fire, or by solvents. How much more then where it is a faculty, not a substance, we are examining; where it eludes the research of all the senses; where the conditions of its existence are various and variously combined; where the effects of those which are present or absent bid defiance to calculation; let me add too, as

a circumstance of great tenderness, where our conclusion would degrade a whole race of men from the rank in the scale of beings which their Creator may perhaps have given them. . . . I advance it therefore as a suspicion only, that the blacks, whether originally a distinct race, or made distinct by time and circumstances, are inferior to the whites in the endowments both of body and mind. . . .

There must doubtless be an unhappy influence on the manners of our people produced by the existence of slavery among us. The whole commerce between master and slave is a perpetual exercise of the most boisterous passions, the most unremitting despotism on the one part, and degrading submissions on the other. Our children see this, and learn to imitate it; for man is an imitative animal. This quality is the germ of all education in him. From his cradle to his grave he is learning to do what he sees others do. If a parent could find no motive either in his philanthropy or his self-love, for restraining the intemperance of passion towards his slave, it would always be a sufficient one that his child is present. But generally it is not sufficient. The parent storms, the child looks on, catches the lineaments of wrath, puts on the same airs in the circle of smaller slaves, gives a loose to his worst of passions, and thus nursed, educated, and daily exercised in tyranny, cannot but be stamped by it with odious peculiarities. The man must be a prodigy who can retain his manners and morals undepraved by such circumstances. And with what execration should the statesman be loaded, who permitting one half the citizens thus to trample on the rights of the other, transforms those into despots, and these into enemies, destroys the morals of the one part, and the *amor patriae* of the other. For if a slave can have a country in this world, it must be any other in preference to that in which he is born to live and labour for another: in which he must lock up the faculties of his nature, contribute as far as depends on his individual endeavours to the evanishment of the human race, or entail his own miserable condition on the endless generations proceeding from him. With the morals of the people, their industry also is destroyed. For in a warm climate, no man will labour for himself who can make

another labour for him. This is so true, that of the proprietors of slaves a very small proportion indeed are ever seen to labour. And can the liberties of a nation be thought secure when we have removed their only firm basis, a conviction in the minds of the people that these liberties are of the gift of God? That they are not to be violated but with his wrath? Indeed I tremble for my country when I reflect that God is just: that his justice cannot sleep for ever.

Questions

1. What reasons does Jefferson offer for colonizing blacks outside the United States in the event of emancipation?
2. How does Jefferson describe the effect of slavery on the morals and behavior of white Virginians?

44. J. Hector St. John de Crèvecoeur, "What, Then, Is the American?" (1782)

Source: J. Hector St. John de Crèvecoeur, Letters from an American Farmer (London, 1782), pp. 48-56.

In the era of the Revolution, many foreigners celebrated the United States as not only an independent nation, but a new society in which individuals could enjoy opportunities unknown in the Old World and where a new nationality was being forged from the diverse populations of Europe. No one promoted this image of America more enthusiastically than J. Hector St. John de Crèvecoeur, who had settled in New York and married the daughter of a prominent landowner after serving in the French army during the Seven Years' War. He later returned to France and published a glowing account of life in the United States, entitled *Letters from an American Farmer*. As one who had lived in both Europe and the United States, he outlined the differences a newcomer was likely to note between the two societies.

that ever disgraced mankind. The focus of both despotism and nobility was far from this land of liberty, and its glorious adherents could not be infected with the pernicious breath of mad royalty and impudent aristocracy. The popular cause was opposed openly, sword in hand, and victoriously fought by the friends to the rights of men; had the French republicans met with such opponents, they had not done those excesses, the king, the nobles and clergy have roused them to by the most perfidious contrivances. A king did not forswear himself in America, nor had the American people more than one [Benedict] Arnold; their tempers were soured neither by misery nor by a complicated system of treachery, framed coolly and pursued with the greatest obstinacy. The American people were not loaded with enormous taxes that had reduced millions of their fellow citizens to the utmost misery to maintain haughty plunderers in sloth and profligacy. All this odds must be reckoned by impartial men; to explain the difference insidiously delineated between the two revolutions, by some desperate royalty, or a narrow minded plan.

Questions

1. Why does Bache believe that Americans should support the French Revolution despite the bloodshed taking place in France?
2. What does he see as the similarities and differences between the American and French Revolutions?

46. Address of the Democratic-Republican Society of Pennsylvania (1794)

Source: Democratic-Republican Society of Pennsylvania: Excerpt from minutes of The Democratic Society of Pennsylvania, December 18, 1794. The Historical Society of Pennsylvania (HSP), Collection # Am. 315/3150. Reprinted with permission.

Another example of the spread of public involvement in politics during the 1790s was the emergence in 1793 and 1794 of the Democratic-Republic societies. The societies harshly criticized the policies of George Washington's administration, which they claimed were planting the seeds of aristocracy in the United States.

Federalists saw the societies as an example of how American freedom was getting out of hand. The government, not "self-created societies," declared the president, was the authentic voice of the American people. They also accused the societies of helping to foment the Whiskey Rebellion of 1794, in which farmers in western Pennsylvania resisted paying a new federal tax on distilled liquor. Forced to justify their existence, the societies developed a defense of the right of the people to debate political issues and organize to affect public policy. As a statement adopted by the Democratic-Republican Society of Pennsylvania insisted, "freedom of opinion" was the "bulwark of liberty," a natural right that no government could restrict.

THE DEMOCRATIC SOCIETY of Pennsylvania, established in Philadelphia, to their Fellow Citizens throughout the United States.

FELLOW CITIZENS,

The principles and proceedings of our Association have lately been calumniated. We should think ourselves unworthy to be ranked as Freemen, if awed by the name of any man, however he may command the public gratitude for past services, we could suffer in silence so sacred a right, so important a principle, as the freedom of opinion to be infringed, by attack on Societies which stand on that constitutional basis.

We shall not imitate our opponents, by resorting to declamation and abuse, instead of calm reasoning, and substituting assertion for proof. They have termed us anarchists; they have accused us of fomenting the unfortunate troubles in the western counties of this State:—yet not a single fact have they been able to adduce in support of the charge,—They have accused us of aiming at the overthrow of

the Constitution; and this also rests upon their bare assertion. Neither shall we recriminate; though we might with at least as much plausibility assert, that endeavours to crush the freedom of opinion and of speech, denote liberticide intentions. But we shall content ourselves with a bare examination of the question, which has agitated the public mind; and refute the calumnies heaped on our Institution.

Freedom of thought, and a free communication of opinions by speech or through the medium of the press, are the safeguards of our Liberties. Apathy as to public concerns, too frequent even in Republics, is the reason for usurpation: by the communication or collision of sentiments, knowledge is increased, and truth prevails.

By the freedom of opinion, cannot be meant the right of thinking merely; for of this right the greatest Tyrant cannot deprive his meanest slave; but, it is freedom in the communication of sentiments, [by] speech or through the press. This liberty is an imprescriptable right, independent of any Constitution or social compact: it is as complete a right as that which any man has to the enjoyment of his life. These principles are eternal—they are recognized by our Constitution; and that nation is already enslaved that does not acknowledge their truth.

In the expression of sentiments, speech is the natural organ—the press an artificial one and though the latter, from the services it has rendered, has obtained the just appellation of Bulwark of Liberty; it would not be difficult to show that the former should be more prized because more secure from usurpation.

If freedom of opinion, in the sense we understand it, is the right of every Citizen, by what mode of reasoning can that right be denied to an assemblage of Citizens? A conviction that the exercise of this right collectively could not be questioned, led to the formation of our institution; and in the conduct the Society have held since their first establishment, they trust, no instance can be adduced in which they have overstepped the just bounds of the right, of which they claim the enjoyment. . . .

. . .

The Society are free to declare that they never were more strongly impressed with a sentiment of the importance of associations, on the principles which they hold, than at the present time. The germ of an odious Aristocracy is planted among us—it has taken root,—and has indeed already produced fruit worthy of the parent stock. If it be imprudent to eradicate this baneful exotic, let us at least unite in checking its growth. Let us remain firm in attachment to principles, and with a jealous eye guard our rights against the least infringement. The enlightened state of the public mind in this country, frees us, we trust, of all apprehension from bold and open usurpation; but the gradual approaches of artful ambition, are the source of great danger. Let us especially guard, with firmness, the outposts of our Liberties: and, if we wish to baffle the efforts of the enemies of freedom, whatever garb they may assume, let us be particularly watchful to preserve inviolate the freedom of opinion, assured that it is the most effectual weapon for the protection of our liberty.

Resolved, That the said Address be signed by the President and attested by the Acting Secretary: and that it be published.

Questions

1. How do the members of the Democratic-Republican Society defend their right to form a society that comments on public affairs?
2. What do they mean by writing that “the germ of an odious Aristocracy” has been planted in the United States?

47. Judith Sargent Murray, “On the Equality of the Sexes” (1790)

Source: *Judith Sargent Murray, “On the Equality of the Sexes,”* Massachusetts Magazine, Vol. 2 (March 1790), pp. 132-35.