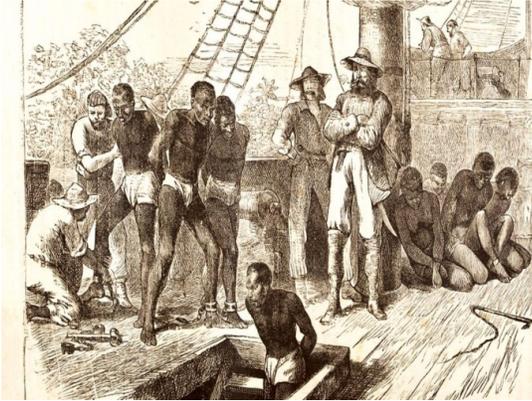


OUR FOUNDING FATHERS AND SLAVERY IN AMERICA

“We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal”



“An enlightened citizenry is indispensable for the proper functioning of a republic. Self-government is not possible unless the citizens are educated sufficiently to enable them to exercise oversight. It is therefore imperative that the nation see to it that a suitable education be provided for all its citizens. [Therefore], if a nation expects to be ignorant and free in a state of civilization, it expects what never was and never will be. Educate and inform the whole mass of the people. They are the only sure reliance for the preservation of our liberty.”— **Thomas Jefferson**

National Liberty Alliance provides the only peaceful and lawful solution to save our Republic and it will require a grassroots “commitment” of about 30,000 People to take it back. Thomas Jefferson said, *“We in America do not have government by the majority. We have government by the majority who participate.”*

THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA WAS BUILT UPON LIBERTY FOR ALL For centuries, slavery had been a growing part of the economy world-wide. In North America, slavery was established somewhere in the 1500’s. Our Founding fathers prior to the creation of the United States of America were born and lived under British rule which promoted slavery in the colonies at the time of the Revolution.

In 1729, Benjamin Franklin became the owner and publisher of a colonial newspaper, the *Pennsylvania Gazette*, and through public discourse, initiated by Benjamin Franklin, motivated the national narrative concerning the abusive King George of Brittan. Originally the dialog was to expose and repair the problems of the colonial relationship with Brittan which eventually turned into a Declaration of Independence from Brittan. Amongst the discussions for the creation of this new nation, the United States of America, was the issue to end slavery led by Thomas Jefferson, author of the Declaration of Independence which declared;

“We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness.--That to secure these rights, Governments are instituted among Men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed.”

Jefferson thereby, changed the national narrative to “Enlightenment” and a government by consent of the People and that “All Men” are created equal. This discourse led to self- examination of themselves in their pursuit of their own Liberty from their abusive king which led our founding fathers to the conclusion that the norm of slavery that they were born under was evil.

As chairman of the committee that drafted the Declaration of Independence, Jefferson wrote a paragraph condemning slavery in his first draft of the Declaration. He included this paragraph in his list of complaints against King George III. Before the final version of the Declaration was adopted, the following paragraph was deleted because many believed it was too early to take such a bold stand and would threaten the union of the colonies.

“He [King George III] has waged cruel war against human nature itself, violating its most sacred rights of life liberty in the persons of a distant people who never offended him, captivating carrying them into slavery in another hemisphere, or to incur miserable death in their transportation thither. This piratical warfare, the infamy of infidel powers, is the warfare of the CHRISTIAN king of Great Britain determined to keep open a market where MEN should be bought and sold, he has prostituted his negative for suppressing every legislative attempt to prohibit or to restrain this execrable commerce.”

Jefferson went on to call the institution of slavery “*abominable commerce*” and an “*assemblage of horrors*.” He then criticized the crown for “*exciting those very people to rise in arms among us, and to purchase that liberty of which he has deprived them, by murdering the people on whom he also obtruded them: thus paying off former crimes committed against the Liberties of one people, with crimes which he urges them to commit against the lives of another.*”

Like many of his contemporaries in Virginia, Jefferson held benevolent views of his slaves, feeling responsible for their welfare while doubting their ability to succeed in a free white world. Jefferson had strong scruples against selling slaves saying, “*while freeing persons whose habits have been formed in slavery is like abandoning children... My opinion has ever been that, until more can be done for them, we should endeavor, with those whom fortune has thrown on our hands, to feed and clothe them well, protect them from ill usage, require such reasonable labor only as is performed voluntarily by freemen, and be led by no repugnancies to abdicate them, and our duties to them... Nothing would induce me to put my Negroes out of my own protection.*”

Jefferson’s character had to be destroyed in order for the New World Order that was already entrenched in the creation of our government as early as 1776 to take a foothold. By 1792 Hamilton, who already had strong ties to the foreign bankers, was already advocating for a National bank at which time Jefferson saw Hamilton as a threat to liberty. Jefferson knew that a central bank would destroy America. Jefferson knew their diabolical plan to destroy our Republic, he said;

“I believe that banking institutions are more dangerous to our liberties than standing armies. If the American people ever allow private banks to control the issue of their currency, first by inflation, then by deflation, the banks and corporations that will grow up around (these banks) will deprive the people of all property until their children wake up homeless on the continent their fathers conquered.”

The first act of Jefferson’s political career was an attempt to make it legal for slave owners in Virginia to emancipate their slaves. That bill was rejected, as was the condemnation of slavery in his original draft of the Declaration of Independence. His labors in this cause finally met with some success in

1778, when he introduced a bill in the Virginia House of Delegates to prevent the further importation of slaves into the state. The proposal was approved, but he recognized that it only stopped the increase of the evil by importation, leaving to future efforts its final eradication.”

It was Jefferson’s desire to open the way for this “final eradication” the very next year, when his committee submitted their proposals for the revision of Virginia’s legal code. However, he ascertained through conversations with his colleagues that the legislature was not yet prepared to consider such a progressive step so he calculated another strategy. The bill on the subject of slaves was a mere digest of the existing laws respecting them, without any intimation of a plan for a future and general emancipation. It was thought better that this should be kept back, and attempted only by way of amendment whenever the bill should be brought on. But when the bill did come up for debate, Jefferson was unable to get his amendment passed after which he wrote;

“It was found that the public mind would not yet bear the proposition.... Yet the day is not distant when it must bear and adopt it, or worse will follow. Nothing is more certainly written in the book of fate than that these people are to be free.”

Jefferson would be heard from again on the issue of slavery.

The vast area between the Appalachians and the Mississippi River had long been claimed by several of the original states, but the recent cession of these claims placed the area under the control of Congress. In early 1784, Jefferson was appointed chairman of a committee to settle the many land disputes which had arisen and to prepare a plan for the government of this western region. Jefferson himself drafted the report, known to history as the Ordinance of 1784.

According to one scholar, the plan “ranked second in importance only to the Declaration of Independence among Jefferson’s state papers. This document which reprinted together with preliminary drafts became the basis for the famous Northwest Ordinance of 1787. It provided for the creation of self-governing territories that would eventually be admitted to the Union on terms of full equality with the original states. It was a bold and brilliant concept, one that would ultimately have a tremendous influence on the westward expansion of the United States.!”

But Congress rejected a very significant element in Jefferson’s report on the western territories. He had included in his bill a clause barring slavery in any of these territories after the year 1800 a measure which might have averted the Civil War but this proposal was defeated by one vote. Jefferson lamented:

“The voice of a single individual ... would have prevented this abominable crime from spreading itself over the new country. Thus we see the fate of millions unborn hanging on the tongue of one man, and Heaven was silent in that awful moment! But it is to be hoped it will not always be silent, and that the friends to the rights of human nature will in the end prevail.”

In 1782, Thomas Jefferson said: *“I tremble for my country when I reflect that God is just; that His justice cannot sleep forever; that considering numbers, nature, and natural means only, a revolution of*

the wheel of fortune, an exchange of situation, is among possible events; [and] that it may become probable by supernatural interference! The Almighty has no attribute which can take side with us in such a contest.”

Jefferson worried about what might have to take place before this victory for “*the rights of human nature*” could be secured. Jefferson had actually advocated this idea eight years earlier. His proposed new Virginia Constitution contained a provision that, “*Any future colonies established from Virginia’s western domain would be free and independent of this colony and of all the world.*”

Always an optimist in the end, however, Jefferson noted the next year that, “*The cause of emancipation was gaining daily recruits from the influx into office of young men, grown and growing up. These have sucked in the principles of liberty, as it were, with their mother’s milk; and it is to them I look with anxiety to turn the fate of this question.*”

The Democratic-Republican Party, better known at the time as the Republican Party and various other names, was an American political party founded by Thomas Jefferson and James Madison in the early 1790s that championed republicanism which is rule by law and not men. Jefferson began his presidency with a plea for reconciliation stating;

“We are all Republicans, we are all Federalists.”

He had no plans for a permanent two-party system of government. He also began with a strong commitment to limited government and strict construction of the Constitution. All these commitments were soon to be tested by the exigencies of war, diplomacy, and political contingency.

It is important to take in account that slavery was a norm of the eighteenth century. Like many citizens of his time Benjamin Franklin owned slaves from as early as 1735 until 1781 and viewed them as inferior to white Europeans, as it was believed they could not be educated. After 1758 Franklin gradually changed his mind when his friend Samuel Johnson brought him to one of Dr. Bray’s schools for black children. Dr. Bray Associates was a philanthropic association affiliated to the Church of England. In 1759 Franklin met with Anthony Benezet who started a school in Philadelphia and who later co-founded the Abolition Society. In 1763 Franklin wrote that African shortcomings and ignorance were not inherently natural but come from lack of education, slavery and negative environments. He also wrote that he saw no difference in learning between African and white children. After the American Revolution, many colonists particularly in the North, where slavery was relatively unimportant to the agricultural economy began to link the oppression of enslaved Africans to their own oppression by the British, and to call for slavery’s abolition.

WHAT ABRAHAM LINCOLN SAID ABOUT OUR FOUNDERS AND SLAVERY!

“The founding fathers, said Lincoln, had opposed slavery. They adopted a Declaration of Independence that pronounced all men created equal. They enacted the Northwest Ordinance of 1787 banning slavery from the vast Northwest Territory. To be sure, many of the founders owned slaves. But they asserted their hostility to slavery in principle while tolerating it temporarily (as they hoped) in practice. That was why they did not mention the words “slave” or “slavery” in the Constitution, but

referred only to “persons held to service.” “Thus, the thing is hid away, in the constitution,” said Lincoln, “just as an afflicted man hides away a wen or a cancer, which he dares not cut out at once, lest he bleed to death; with the promise, nevertheless, that the cutting may begin at the end of a given time. The first step was to prevent the spread of this cancer, which the fathers took with the Northwest Ordinance, the prohibition of the African slave trade in 1807, and the Missouri Compromise restriction of 1820. The second was to begin a process of gradual emancipation, which the generation of the fathers had accomplished in the states north of Maryland.”

“In 1794, they prohibited an out-going slave-trade---that is, the taking of slaves from the United States to sell.

In 1798, they prohibited the bringing of slaves from Africa, into the Mississippi Territory---this territory then comprising what are now the States of Mississippi and Alabama. This was ten years before they had the authority to do the same thing as to the States existing at the adoption of the constitution.

In 1800 they prohibited American Citizens from trading in slaves between foreign countries---as, for instance, from Africa to Brazil.

In 1803 they passed a law in aid of one or two State laws, in restraint of the internal slave trade.

In 1807, in apparent hot haste, they passed the law, nearly a year in advance to take effect the first day of 1808---the very first day the constitution would permit---prohibiting the African slave trade by heavy pecuniary and corporal penalties.

In 1820, finding these provisions ineffectual, they declared the trade piracy, and annexed to it, the extreme penalty of death. While all this was passing in the general government, five or six of the original slave States had adopted systems of gradual emancipation; and by which the institution was rapidly becoming extinct within these limits. Thus we see, the plain unmistakable spirit of that age, towards slavery, was hostility to the principle, and toleration, only by necessity.”

In Lincoln’s famous 1860 Cooper Union speech, he noted that, “of the 39 framers of the Constitution, 22 had voted on the question of banning slavery in the new territories. Twenty of the 22 voted to ban it, while another one of the Constitution’s framers--George Washington--signed into law legislation enforcing the Northwest Ordinance that banned slavery in the Northwest Territories.”

At Cooper Union, Lincoln also quoted Thomas Jefferson, who had argued in favor of Virginia emancipation: “It is still in our power to direct the process of emancipation, and deportation, peaceably, and in such slow degrees, as that the evil will wear off insensibly.... To be sure, the Founding Fathers weren’t abolitionists, they were overwhelmingly antislavery.”

BEFORE WE JUDGE TOO HARSHLY, we must understand that slavery was established long before the Revolutionary War. There isn’t a specific date, of course, but it grew from there. Our Founding Fathers were born into a world whose economy relied on slave labor – from cotton, tobacco, and sugar cane plantations even to local businesses. Some believe that since slavery was so commonplace, growing a

conscience about it might easily not have happened at all. They suggest that the fact that they opposed slavery at all is incredibly radical for their time. They did, in fact “grow” consciences. By the quotes, letters, and documents they left behind, it is clear that our founding fathers wished to see slavery ended, though they did not believe it possible for it to happen in their lifetimes. Some of them, most notably **Thomas Jefferson**, Benjamin Franklin, Alexander Hamilton, and John Jay, were very supportive of the rapidly growing abolitionist movement.

Benjamin Franklin was President of the Pennsylvania society for Promoting the Abolition of Slavery, which included Jay and Hamilton. The year he died, he signed a petition for the abolition of all slavery. He died before he got to see it become a reality. John Jay, as governor of New York, made numerous efforts to push anti-slavery laws. He founded the New York State Society for Promoting the Man-umission of Slaves and New York’s African Free School, which taught freed slaves reading, writing, and basic arithmetic. Hamilton grew up with a deep rooted hatred of the slave trade that fueled his work as an avid supporter of the abolitionists his entire life.

The Founding Fathers public attitude towards slavery suggests that they were not cruel slave-owners nor mistreated those beneath them. Even James Madison, who never made any public anti-slavery efforts, is quoted as telling his overseers to be kind and compassionate to his slaves. Benjamin Franklin taught his slaves to read and write and cared very much for some of them.

A British abolitionist wrote a letter to James Madison asking many questions about slavery, that gives a picture of how Madison viewed slavery, and what the prevalent beliefs about slavery were at the time. According to Madison, it was not uncommon for slave-owners to get attached to their slaves and the smaller the household, the more this seemed to be true, especially of our Founding Fathers. In letters from these men to and from their wives, they recall many stories about their personal slaves ask about their wellbeing, and in more than one case, they requested in their wills that those closest to them be freed at their deaths. None of the Founding Fathers lived to see the legal abolition of slavery, though by the time they died they had contributed toward preparing the Gradual Act for the Abolition of Slavery.

Patrick Henry, who is most famous for his quote “Give me liberty, or give me death!,” wrote in a letter , “I am drawn along by the general inconvenience of living without them. I will not—I cannot justify it, however culpable my conduct.”

When George Washington’s father Augustine died in 1743, George Washington became a slave owner at the early age of eleven. Despite having been an active slave holder for 56 years, George Washington struggled with the institution of slavery and spoke frequently of his desire to end the practice. Washington wrote to a friend and said, “*I can only say that there is not a man living who wishes more sincerely than I do to see a plan adopted for the abolition of [slavery].*”

Patrick Henry wrote, “*It is not a little surprising that Christianity ... should encourage a practice so totally repugnant to the first impressions of right and wrong.*”

James Madison, in a letter to his father, told a story about his slave who was traveling with him. He concluded that he would have to sell the slave, though “I do not expect to get near the worth of him; but cannot think of punishing him by transportation merely for coveting that liberty for which we have paid the price of so much blood, and have proclaimed so often to be the right, & worthy the pursuit, of every human being.

George Mason, called the father of the bill of rights said in his address to the Virginia Ratifying Convention, “*As much as I value an union of all the states, I would not admit the southern states into the union, unless they agreed to the discontinuance of this disgraceful trade, because it would bring weakness and not strength to the union.*” and “*The augmentation of slaves weakens the states; and such a trade is diabolical in itself, and disgraceful to mankind.*”