



NEWSLETTER

October 2026 ISSUE#: HV032

Mercer We the People of Hopewell Valley is a steady source of news to heal the accelerating erosion of our fundamental freedoms nationally and locally.

Embrace our First Amendment

Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the government for a redress of grievances.

Source: <https://billofrightsinstitute.org/primary-sources/bill-of-rights>

Kind regards,
Publius Bonhomme Richard, Publisher & Co-Editors

HOW TO CONTACT US:

Email us at: info@mercervethepeople.com

Please email us to be included for future newsletters.

Printed copies of the newsletter will be made available at Rosedale Mills and local library. Any other suggested location(s) please let us know.

Call for Contributors!

MercerWe the People of Hopewell Valley is looking for contributors to write articles, especially informing the community about what is happening at local meetings. If you're interested in writing for us about that or any other topic, whether it is monthly or as needed, please reach out to us at info@mercervethepeople.com

The Crowd Chooses Barabbas

Editor's Note:

Are we in biblical times? Does history repeat itself?

Biblical Context:

The event of the crowd choosing Barabbas over Jesus is a pivotal moment in the Passion narrative, recorded in all four Gospels: Matthew 27:15-26, Mark 15:6-15, Luke 23:13-25, and John 18:39-40. This episode occurs during the trial of Jesus before Pontius Pilate, the Roman governor of Judea. It highlights the rejection of Jesus by the Jewish authorities and the people, fulfilling the prophetic scriptures concerning the Messiah's suffering and rejection...

Moral and Ethical Reflections:

The crowd's decision reflects the influence of mob mentality and the susceptibility of people to manipulation by leaders with ulterior motives. It serves as a cautionary tale about the dangers of forsaking truth and justice for expediency or out of fear of authority. The episode challenges believers to stand firm in their convictions, even when faced with societal pressure...



Christ before Pilate, Andrea Schiavone, 1555/1558, Public domain. A moment before a decision that would shape everything.

Conclusion:

The account of the crowd choosing Barabbas over Jesus remains a powerful testament to the complexities of human nature and the profound mystery of divine grace. It invites believers to contemplate the cost of redemption and the depth of Christ's love for humanity.

Access the Bible topic: https://biblehub.com/topical/t/the_crowd_chooses_barabbas.htm

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Election

Get Out The Vote On November 3rd

Commentary

By American Anonymous

We have an important election coming up on Tuesday, November 3rd... perhaps you've heard?

Our state may not have as many Republican voters as it used to, since many have fled NJ and are now taunting us with photos from the free state of Florida. (They love to remind us how nice it is down there when we are having snow, don't they?)

The sad fact is that the conservatives who remain in NJ are not voting often enough. If every conservative who complained on social media about NJ actually voted, we'd probably be better prepared for the future, which has grave problems in store for our children and grandchildren.

If you, dear reader, choose not to vote... I offer you the wisdom of Plato: "One of the penalties of refusing to participate in politics is that you end up being governed by your inferiors."

On the ballot in Hopewell Township are two excellent Republican candidates for Hopewell Township Committee, John Hart and Steven Niederer. There is also a unique ballot question on creating a Charter Study Commission via Chart New Course, a bipartisan grassroots movement working to examine the township's charter and discuss whether the government we have still fits the township we've become. More information can be found here: <https://chartnewcourse.org/>

I'm not familiar with the politics of Pennington Borough, but I do know Hopewell Borough pretty well. Given its political climate, the likelihood of a Republican ever being elected to its uni-party Council seems slimmer than the likelihood of Madonna agreeing to put on some pants and age gracefully. Perhaps even slimmer is the probability of finding a borough Republican who isn't too afraid of the baying mob to come out of the closet and run for office. This is the town where words like Nazi, Fascist, F##k Trump, and Pedo in Chief were all over road signs and US mailboxes (and still remain on some, after more than a year), either unnoticed or tacitly approved of by its people.

That being said, there is a possibility that anger over the Hopewell 57 development will motivate a few voters in Hopewell Borough to move their trembling finger away from the "D" button for once, and select an "I" candidate.

Hey, at least they're voting. I hope YOU will too!

Vote For John Hart And Steven Niederer For Hopewell Township Committee



John Hart is a tenth generation farmer who traces his Hopewell roots back more than 250 years, to the Honorable John Hart, a signer of the Declaration of Independence. He is the owner of Rosedale Mills Country Store, Needle Creek Brewery, and John Hart Farms. Rosedale Mills hosts weekly pet adoptions and has helped over 2500 pets find their forever home over the years. John Hart Farms was the first farm preserved in

Hopewell Township. John is a member of Farm Bureau and a member of the Mercer County Board of Agriculture. John is currently serving on the New Jersey State Board of Agriculture.

John has 14 years of experience on the Hopewell Township Committee, serving 2 years as Mayor. John's three children and four grandchildren have all attended the Hopewell Valley Regional School District. John also helped to establish Pop Warner football.



Steven Niederer is a lifelong resident of Hopewell Township and part of a proud fourth-generation farming family. Raised with a strong work ethic, respect for tradition, and a love for the land, Steven embodies the values that define Hopewell's past, present, and future.

Inspired by a calling to public service, he began his career in law enforcement with the Mercer County Sheriff's Office. During his time there he served with

the United States Marshals Service, where he played a key role in locating and apprehending individuals connected to serious and violent criminal offenses. He was also a member of the Mercer County Sheriff's Tactical Response Team. Steven's career was cut short after he was shot in the line of duty. Steven is now a local small business owner as well as a mental health advocate for first responders and community members.

As a candidate for the Hopewell Township Committee, Steven brings a rare blend of lifelong local knowledge, public safety expertise, and deep-rooted values. He is focused on preserving Hopewell's rural character, supporting local agriculture, ensuring responsible development, and fostering a community that works for all its residents.

Now is the time to **demand**
that every dollar of
PILOT payments
is invested where
it matters most:



**Education &
Public Safety**

VOTE Nov 3rd

Paid for by Friends of John and Steve, 91 Titus Mill Road, Pennington, NJ 08534

★★★ VOTE ON NOVEMBER 3RD ★★★

**John
HART
Steven
NIEDERER**

FOR HOPEWELL TOWNSHIP COMMITTEE

YOUR VOICE ★ YOUR HOPEWELL

www.HVRAGOP.org

Paid for by Friends of John and Steve, 91 Titus Mill Road, Pennington, NJ 08534

Vote YES On November 3rd To Create A Charter Study Commission

Chart New Course began because we believe local residents deserve the right to review whether an 18th century committee structure still fits a modern township of 18,500 people managing a \$37 million budget. When our citizen-led petition drive successfully urged the Township Committee to place this question on the ballot, it opened a historic door for our community.

This process is entirely in your hands: A Yes vote this November simply starts a transparent, public study of all 12 forms of government under New Jersey law - including keeping our current structure if it proves best. The commissioners you elect will study the options through 2027, and every single recommendation will come back to you for a final public vote. Nothing changes without your approval.

Learn more at: <https://chartnewcourse.org/>



Hopewell Township Has Changed.

Hopewell Township's Government Structure Must Change Too.

Vote YES on November 3rd to create a Charter Study Commission.

Vote For Our Candidates For The Charter Study Commission

Hopewell Citizens for Better Government, a Joint Candidate Committee. Vote only for our four candidates:

Chad Goerner

Stephen Klopfer

Michael Markulec

Tamera Matteo

HOPEWELL TOWNSHIP MUNICIPAL QUESTION	
Shall a charter commission be elected to study the charter of the Township of Hopewell and to consider a new charter or improvements in the present charter and to make recommendations thereon?	
INTERPRETIVE STATEMENT	
A "yes" vote on this public question indicates you support the formation of a five-member charter commission to study Hopewell Township's form of government, and consider a new form of government, or improvements in the present form of government, and make recommendations about the present form. A "no" vote indicates you do not support the formation of a charter commission. Regardless of your vote on this public question, you are entitled to vote for five commissioners who will take office if the public question is approved.	
YES ☒	NO ☐

CHARTER STUDY COMMISSIONER ELECTION BALLOT

Hopewell Township

OFFICE TITLE	Column E Charter Study		PERSONAL CHOICE
Charter Study Commissioners Vote for Five	1E ☐ CHRISTOPHER PAZDAN	6E ☐ GRACE ELIZABETH RARICH	☐ WRITE-IN
	2E ☒ STEPHEN KLOPFER	7E ☒ MICHAEL MARKULEC	☐ WRITE-IN
	3E ☒ TAMERA MATTEO	8E ☐ JOSHUA J. WILSON	☐ WRITE-IN
	4E ☐ MELANIE R. WALTER	9E ☒ CHAD GOERNER	☐ WRITE-IN
	5E ☐ FRANCIS GUENTHER		☐ WRITE-IN

HOPEWELL CITIZENS FOR BETTER GOVERNMENT
VOTE YES • Charter Study Commissioners: 2E • 3E • 7E • 9E

We Need Your Help With The November 3rd Election

Interested in seeing the election process firsthand? Please consider becoming a poll worker or poll challenger on election day.

Poll Workers

Mercer County Board of Elections is historically short on Republican poll workers, there should be at least two R's and two D's at each polling location. Hours are full day (5am to 8:15pm) and there are half day shifts available. This position is hired and paid through the county.

Poll Challengers

Challengers observe the voting process and are appointed by the Republican County Committee. It is a volunteer position but has more flexibility with the schedule.

Training provided for both options. Please contact info@hvragep.org for more information.

Learn More About the Candidates

Visit <https://hvragep.org/candidates/> or <https://mercernjgop.com/candidates> to learn more about the candidates that are running in Hopewell Valley and in Mercer County.

It's Not too Late to Register to Vote

For those of you who are not registered to vote, the Voter Registration deadline is October 13, 2026. If you are a US citizen 18 years of age or older and have been a resident of the County for 30 days prior to the election, you can register to vote online by following this link <https://nj.gov/state/elections/voter-registration.shtml>

Education

What's Happening In HVRSD Schools?

HVRSD Board Of Education Meeting September 14, 2026

By The Wall of Ed

Agenda: <https://go.boarddocs.com/nj/hvragep/Board.nsf/Public#tab-meetings>

Meeting Recording: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=C6_zHdNpvY4

October 5, 2026 Special Meeting 5:30 PM

Next Regular Meeting October 12, 2026 6:30 PM at the HVRSD Board Office, 425 Main St, Pennington, NJ



Fellowship of Christian Athletes (FCA) "See You At The Pole" at Hopewell Valley Central High School September 23 2026. Photo courtesy by a contributor.

America's Startup: The Contest - What's Your Winning Idea?

Watch America's Startup Video (3mins 39secs): <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oLNmLaHfk30>

America's greatest innovations often begin as bold ideas—dreamed up in classrooms, garages, labs, and communities across the country. **America's Startup** is designed to spotlight, support, and celebrate those ideas at their earliest stages.

As a signature program within America Innovates, America's Startup provides a **national platform for student founders, young entrepreneurs, and early-stage innovators** whose ideas could help shape the next 250 years of American ingenuity, creativity, and progress.

America's Startup is a national collegiate startup competition created to spotlight early-stage business ideas with the potential to drive America's future economic, technological, and societal progress led by undergraduates or the equivalent from universities, colleges, or trade schools.

Participants submit a proposal and pitch video outlining their business idea, with selected teams advancing through a multi-stage review process that includes a live pitch experience.



After a successful pilot program in the spring, The America's Startup contest application portal is opening now for another round this fall.

Submit Your Idea Now: <https://america250.org/americas-startup/apply/>

NO PURCHASE NECESSARY. Contest begins at 12:01 a.m. EDT on 8/17/26 and ends at 7:59 p.m. EDT on 10/8/26. Open to legal residents of the U.S. 13+, who are current undergraduate students at an accredited university, college or trade school in the U.S. Semi-finalists must travel in early-mid December 2026. See Official Rules for full details on how to enter, eligibility requirements, judging procedure and prize descriptions. Void where prohibited.

Who Can Participate

America's Startup is open to:

- **U.S. students enrolled as undergraduates or equivalent in accredited U.S. colleges, universities, or trade schools**
- Founders working individually or in small teams
- Early-stage ideas, concepts, or ventures across industries

Participants must be legal residents of the United States or U.S. territories and meet eligibility requirements outlined in the Official Contest Rules.

America's Startup is intentionally **student-centered**, welcoming founders at the idea or early execution stage — not just those with polished companies or existing funding.

What Finalists Receive

America's Startup will award **non-dilutive grant funding to 10 finalists**, allowing founders to retain full ownership of their business ideas.

Finalist teams receive:

- **\$25,000 in non-dilutive grant funding**
- National recognition as America's Startup winners
- Visibility among investors, entrepreneurs, and innovation leaders
- **AND 3 teams will win an additional \$25,000 of non-dilutive funding** for a total of \$50,000 each

Additional opportunities may include mentorship, educational programming, and consideration for accelerator or incubator support.

Learn More: <https://america250.org/americas-startup/>

As America250 continues to recognize our nation's 250th anniversary, America's Startup is investing in the innovators whose ideas, creativity, and determination will help shape our next 250 years.

We can't wait to see what these entrepreneurs will build!

— **The America250 Team**

Local News

Cory Booker, Justin Murphy Will Debate On October 8, Sponsored By N.J. Globe And Rider

First faceoff between two candidates for U.S. Senate

By New Jersey Globe Staff, July 24 2026 1:59 pm

The New Jersey Globe and Rider University will host the first debate in the race for a United States Senate seat in New Jersey between Democratic incumbent Cory Booker and Republican Justin Murphy on Thursday, October 8, at 7 PM.

The 60-minute in-person debate will be streamed on the New Jersey Globe, Facebook Live, X (formerly Twitter), YouTube, and C-SPAN. The debate will be available to voters through the November general election.

New Jersey Globe Editor David Wildstein will moderate the debate with Micah Rasmussen, the director of the Rebovich Institute for New Jersey Politics at Rider University. Additional questions will come from Rider students.

Access the full article: <https://newjerseyglobe.com/congress/booker-murphy-will-debate-on-october-8-sponsored-by-n-j-globe-and-rider/>

Local Events

Things to do. Check out some upcoming local events:

Hopewell Valley Vineyards (Pennington NJ) events: <https://www.hopewellvalleyvineyards.com/>

Needle Creek Farm Brewery (Pennington NJ) events: <https://www.needlecreek.com/event-page>

Washington Crossing State Park NJ events: <https://www.wcpa-nj.com/events>

Washington Crossing Historic Park PA events: <https://www.washingtoncrossingpark.org/events/>

And there is across the country: Celebrating the Triumph of the American Spirit. 250 years ago, America chose freedom. This year, we celebrate it in every city, every town, every stretch of American road. Discover Ways To Celebrate: <https://www.freedom250.org/celebration>

Election Integrity

Mercer County Election Lawsuit Enters Critical Phase: Summary Judgment, Mediation And November Trial Ahead

By C4NJEI

TRENTON, N.J. — The Mercer County election lawsuit arising from the November 2022 General Election has entered what could be its decisive phase. After more than two years of litigation, document discovery and depositions of election officials, the plaintiffs in *Murranko v. Mercer County Board of Elections*, Docket No. MER-L-000324-24, **filed a motion for summary judgment on September 11, 2026**. The motion hearing is scheduled for October 9, 2026.



The case now has two additional dates on the calendar. **Mediation is scheduled to begin October 23, 2026, and trial is scheduled to begin November 16, 2026.**

Together, the three dates establish the next major stages of the litigation: the court will first consider the plaintiffs' request for summary judgment; if the case remains unresolved, the parties are scheduled to enter mediation two weeks later; and claims or issues not resolved through summary judgment or mediation are currently scheduled for trial beginning November 16.

Case grew out of Mercer County's 2022 election problems

The lawsuit was originally filed on February 14, 2024, by ten Mercer County voters. It asserts voter disenfranchisement and other claims under the New Jersey Civil Rights Act, 42 U.S.C. §1983 and the New Jersey Declaratory Judgment Act.

At the center of the case is the **countywide failure of Mercer County's Election Day tabulators on November 8, 2022**. According to the plaintiffs' recently filed Statement of Undisputed Material Facts, deposition testimony established that Election Day tabulators could not scan ballots at polling locations and that the problem was countywide.

The plaintiffs contend that some qualified voters were then improperly directed to cast provisional ballots rather than emergency ballots. Several plaintiffs testified that they later received notices saying their provisional ballots had been rejected because they had already "voted by machine," even though they maintain that they had not successfully cast another ballot.

The defendants have contested the plaintiffs' claims throughout the litigation.

Depositions produced new evidence

The significance of the September 2026 motion is that the plaintiffs are no longer relying primarily on the allegations contained in their original complaint. Their motion incorporates testimony obtained during discovery from Board members, election employees and other officials

Among the testimony cited by plaintiffs is an acknowledgment by the Board's designated representative that early-morning voters who had checked in and were directed to vote provisionally should have received **emergency ballots**. The plaintiffs also cite testimony that the Board did not issue Election Day instructions specifically addressing voters who had already electronically checked in before being given provisional ballots.

The motion focuses particularly on what happened when provisional ballots were subsequently reviewed. A commissioner testified that she participated in rejecting ballots for the reason "voted by machine," while also testifying that, technically, nobody voted by machine on November 8, 2022. The filing says the Board did not contact affected voters or poll workers or check internal records to determine whether the individuals actually cast another ballot.

A former Superintendent of Elections testified that a voter could be designated by the system as a machine voter after checking in even if that person's ballot was never successfully scanned. The Board's designated representative also testified that the Board had no information showing that any plaintiff whose provisional ballot was rejected as "voted by machine" had actually inserted a ballot into a tabulator.

Case now encompasses procedures, chain of custody and reconciliation

Discovery also developed evidence concerning broader election controls.

The plaintiffs cite testimony that Mercer County lacked written 2022 procedures for counting paper ballots at the district level, transporting ballots that could not be scanned and reconciling paper ballots against electronic poll-book check-ins. The filing also cites testimony that poll workers were not instructed to count ballots as they were removed from machines.

Chain of custody is another component of the motion. Plaintiffs cite testimony concerning reports of broken seals, the absence of a form for individuals transporting ballots to sign before leaving polling locations and the failure to record ballot counts at each transfer point.

The filing also highlights reconciliation. The Board's designated representative did not recall a reconciliation between electronic poll-book check-ins and paper ballots returned to the Board. She testified that there was "no way to figure" whether the number of ballots removed from tabulators matched the number ultimately delivered to the Board.

The plaintiffs additionally cite their analysis of county records showing what they characterize as numerical discrepancies. Their filing states that Mercer County certified **60,727 Election Day ballots**, while the State voter-history file reflected **55,878 Election Day ballots** as of November 23, 2022. It also states that 5,528 provisional ballots were received while reported accepted and rejected provisional-ballot totals accounted for 5,150. These figures are part of the plaintiffs' evidentiary presentation and remain subject to the defendants' response and the court's assessment.

Plaintiffs ask judge to decide key issues without a trial

Summary judgment asks a court to decide a claim when there is no genuine dispute over material facts and the moving party contends it is entitled to judgment as a matter of law.

Here, the plaintiffs seek summary judgment on Counts One and Two. Their motion argues that the developed record establishes several violations: directing qualified voters to provisional ballots because equipment failed; rejecting ballots as "voted by machine" without determining that another ballot had actually been cast and counted; allegedly treating similarly situated voters differently; and failing to comply with statutory safeguards involving emergency ballots, equipment testing, ballot custody, reconciliation and public observation.

The plaintiffs are also seeking prospective relief intended to govern future elections. Their brief asks the court to require future elections to be administered through procedures that are written, trained, documented, publicly observable and verifiable.

The defendants will have the opportunity to challenge both the plaintiffs' characterization of the evidence and their legal conclusions. The court may grant the motion in whole, deny it, or resolve some issues while leaving others for trial.

Three important dates now shape what happens next

The case therefore faces three significant milestones:

- **October 9, 2026 — Summary judgment motion.** The plaintiffs' motion is scheduled before the court.
- **October 23, 2026 — Mediation begins.** The parties are scheduled to attempt to resolve the dispute without completing a trial.
- **November 16, 2026 — Trial begins.** If unresolved claims remain after the summary-judgment proceedings and mediation, the case is scheduled to proceed to trial.

The scheduled mediation is particularly significant because it falls only about three weeks before trial. Depending on the summary-judgment ruling, mediation could therefore occur after the parties have considerably more clarity about which claims, defendants and factual questions remain for trial.

The lawsuit has consequently moved well beyond the procedural and discovery disputes that occupied much of 2024 and 2025. The parties have now taken extensive testimony, the plaintiffs have assembled a 120-paragraph Statement of Undisputed Material Facts, and the court is being asked to determine whether portions of the case can be decided as a matter of law.

If summary judgment does not dispose of the case and mediation does not produce a settlement, **November 16 would mark the first time the underlying allegations concerning Mercer County's handling of the 2022 election are presented for resolution at trial.**

About Citizens for NJ Election Integrity (C4NJEI)

Citizens for NJ Election Integrity is a non-partisan organization dedicated to ensuring fair and transparent elections in New Jersey. The group advocates for electoral reforms, improved voter verification processes, and public education on election integrity. For more information, please visit <http://www.citizens4njei.org/>.

Media Contact: Mark Flaherty, Communications Director, Citizens for NJ Election Integrity
914-473-2038 • Mark.Flaherty@citizens4njei.org

For further inquiries or to schedule an interview, please contact C4NJEI at the information provided above.

ICYMI

Environmental Activists Show Their True Color: Red, Not Green

By Kevin Mooney originally published in Restoration News (September 10 2026)

The clock is ticking on a decision to join litigation that would ban offshore wind to save the whales.

In a strange twist, the largest, most well-funded environmental advocacy groups have thus far declined to join a growing effort to protect an endangered whale species. This has left grassroots conservationists flummoxed. There is still time for the Natural Resources Defense Council (NRDC), the Sierra Club, and others to jump in, but the clock is ticking on pending litigation.



On August 9, Save Long Beach Island (LBI), an organization based in New Jersey and founded in 2021 for purpose of fighting offshore wind, announced its intention to file a lawsuit against U.S. Department of Commerce (DOC). Save LBI is calling on the department to have its National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) revisit a 16-month-old petition to designate a critical habitat along the East Coast for the benefit of the North Atlantic right whale. The petition also asks NOAA to exclude wind complexes from the migratory critical habitat Save LBI seeks to establish.

Wind or Whales?

NOAA denied the petition on July 22 after Save LBI filed suit to compel the agency to follow the Endangered Species Act's (ESA) 90-day review standard for acting on petitions. 'The new legal notification from Save LBI is modest in scope in that it simply asks NOAA to reconsider its prior decision to turn down the petition. However, it does come with a sense of urgency since NOAA figures show the whale species is down to a sparse population of about 380 with just an estimated 70 females that are reproductively active.

As part of its petition, Save LBI also asked the Department of Interior to conduct an analysis of underwater noise from offshore wind to determine what kind of impact those projects might have on the whales' migration.

Bob Stern, the president of Save LBI, has followed up on previous correspondence addressed to the NRDC, Sierra Club, and more than a dozen other groups in July 2025.

Neither the NRDC nor the Sierra Club have responded to any of Save LBI's correspondence. Stern told Restoration News that Save LBI received "very little response" from other long established environmental outfits with one notable exception. Stern says the Center for Biological Diversity, an environmental advocacy group based in Arizona, did provide Save LBI with a favorable response indicating it would support the petition.

Abandoning Their Pro-Whale History

The NRDC and Sierra Club, along with many other environmental activist groups, have a history of opposing military exercises they view as harmful to whales and other marine life. But as Save LBI points out, both groups support offshore wind despite a growing body of evidence that shows the projects harm whales. Save LBI has released detailed studies that show the construction and potential implementation of offshore wind have already caused whale fatalities migrating up and down the East Coast.

Stern explained to Restoration News why time is a factor for the NRDC and the Sierra Club if they want to protect whales from offshore wind.

"Regarding our lawsuit on the NARW [North Atlantic right whale] migration corridor petition, the filing of our intent to sue starts a 60-day clock by which NOAA has to either agree to reconsider the petition or continue to deny it," Stern said. "If they continue to deny it, which is the likely course, then we will go back to the Court to ask a judge to compel them to consider it, how long that will take I cannot tell. If they agree to consider then they have a year to do a rule-making and based on that make a decision."

Restoration News sent media inquiries to NRDC and the Sierra Club asking their media representatives if the advocacy groups would join in the litigation to protect the right whale, and whether they would make a decision on Save LBI's litigation during the 60-day time frame Stern referenced. Neither group responded.

Save LBI has about 10,000 core members and 100,000 online supporters including homeowners, business owners, and other residents who have united in opposing offshore wind, which they view as harmful to whales and other marine life. The most recent tax filings show Save LBI has just over a million dollars in assets. By comparison, the NRDC sits on almost \$660 million in assets and more than 3 million members, while the Sierra Club has \$152 million in assets and more than 3.8 million members.

In his latest letter to the NRDC, Sierra Club, and others, Stern makes the point that Save LBI's efforts to protect whales is consistent with the stated missions of the largest environmental advocacy groups.

Stern wrote:

If your organization has already considered this issue and determined that participation would not be appropriate, we would appreciate understanding your reasoning. Your organization has consistently articulated a mission of defending whales and their habitats; silence on this issue, which goes to the heart of that mission as we understand it, is puzzling to us.

Suspected Foreign Agents Sue U.S. Navy

The NRDC was involved in a high-profile lawsuit against the U.S. Navy that went to the U.S. Supreme Court in 2008. In *Winter v NRDC*, the environmental activist group argued that naval sonar exercises were harmful to whales and other marine mammals. But the high court in a 5-4 decision ruled against the NRDC and said that the plaintiffs needed to demonstrate an irreparable harm to marine life was likely and not just possible. In his majority opinion, Chief Justice John Roberts determined that Navy's need to conduct realistic training with active sonar far outweighed the specious concerns raised by the NRDC. That's because, as the chief justice explained, the Navy must have the ability to respond to the growing threat of enemy submarines.

Despite setbacks in court, the largest environmental groups remain united in opposition to certain military exercises for the ostensible purpose of protecting sea life. For instance, the Sierra Club, says on its website that "some forms of ocean military testing produce powerful noises capable of harming and killing marine mammals and adversely disrupting behavior." In April, the Sierra Club joined with other green groups in litigation against the Trump administration to restore ESA protections for the Rice's Whale and other species in the Gulf of Mexico. The administration says an exemption to the ESA was needed to allow oil and gas drilling to proceed in the region for national security reasons. But the Sierra Club and its co-litigants are making the case that the national security concerns are not valid and that the oil and gas activities could harm Rice's Whale along with other species.

So why are the NRDC and the Sierra Club running silent when it comes to protecting whales up and down the East Coast? As I argue in my book *Climate Porn: How and Why Anti-Population Zealots Fabricate Science, while Targeting American Capitalism, Freedom, and Independence* the largest, most well-funded environmental groups have been usurped by the climate movement, which often supports measures that are harmful to the environment.

This would help explain why groups like the NRDC and Sierra Club prioritize offshore wind over vulnerable whale populations. Both groups have also been the focus of congressional probes into potential violations of the Foreign Agents Registration Act (FARA). The restrictions green groups seek to impose on U.S. military testing could redound to benefit of Russia and China and raise questions about the sincerity of their environmental efforts.

Stern, an engineer who previously managed environmental reviews for the U.S Department of Energy, wants the NRDC, the Sierra Club, and others to produce evidence (if they have it) showing that the long-term climate benefits of offshore wind "outweigh and justify" near-term risks to the right whale. He also makes the point that Save LBI's own assessments show the climate benefits of offshore wind would be "minute" and accrue over the span of several centuries. At the same time, the conservation group's offshore wind studies show the damage to the environment and the whales would be immediate and severe. Even so, Save LBI invites the NRDC and Sierra Club to produce competing evidence.

Stern wrote:

If you have scientific evidence, modeling, or peer-reviewed analyses that demonstrate that operation noise from full-scale wind complexes will not pose a significant behavioral or physiological risk to North Atlantic right whales, we would welcome the opportunity to see it. Conversely, if our concerns are valid and these complexes are built and operating at scale, any resulting harm to this critically endangered species may be irreversible. Given the right whale's precarious status, we believe we are at a pivotal juncture: decisions made now could determine whether these species survive.

Save LBI's conservation efforts on behalf of whales may be for all the marbles. Environmental advocacy groups that have been in operation for decades now appear poised to advance offshore wind projects that put whales not just in danger put on a path to extinction.

Beyond Hypocrisy

Bonner Cohen, a senior fellow with the National Center for Public Policy Research, told Restoration News that he expects the big green groups to drop the mask and show their true colors.

The deafening silence from NRDC and the Sierra Club on the threat to endangered Atlantic right whales posed by offshore wind turbines reflects these organizations' real commitment to protecting wildlife. Their sympathies clearly lie with propping up what we hope are the remnants of America's misbegotten transition to green energy, and not with the ocean-borne creatures getting in the way. The word 'hypocrisy' doesn't begin to capture what's going on here. There are funds to be raised from deep-pocketed anti-fossil-fuel interests—foreign and domestic. Keeping the climate narrative alive—no matter the cost to marine life or to ocean-front communities—is what this game is all about.

If NOAA decides once again to reject Save LBI's petition, the New Jersey conservationists will most certainly file suit to reverse that decision. They may have also have an ace in the hole in the form of President Donald Trump. In the press release announcing its intention to sue the Commerce Department, Stern says his group is "perplexed" by the department's position because the petition to ban offshore wind is in line with Trump's own stated objectives.

Save LBI has written to the president asking him to intervene. Commerce Secretary Howard Lutnick may want to call his office.

Access the article: <https://restoration-news.com/environmental-activists-show-their-true-color-red-not-green>

Kevin Mooney is a Senior Investigative Researcher for Restoration News specializing in energy policy, environmentalist groups, and dark money. He writes regularly for the American Spectator, Washington Examiner, Daily Caller, Daily Signal, and National Review. Kevin is the author of the new book, Climate Porn: How and Why Anti-Population Zealots Fabricate Science, while Targeting American Capitalism, Freedom, and Independence.

That's Right: Name Change 250 Years Ago

The Graf Dairy Hero Foundation's Post

By Werner Graf originally published in The Graf Dairy Hero Foundation (September 9 2026)

September 9, 1776 — 250 years ago today, the Continental Congress officially changed the nation's name to "The United States of America". "United Colonies" and other descriptors had previously appeared in commissioned and official documents.

The change reflected Thomas Jefferson's wording of the Declaration of Independence which cited "States" 8 times including the preamble stating: "The unanimous Declaration of the thirteen united States of America." It also appeared in the first draft of the Articles of Confederation. In fact, Richard Henry Lee's resolution for independence noted: "these United Colonies are, and of right ought to be, free and independent States." Now Congress made that name official.

A federalist mindset was beginning to take hold, one which would be consummated after the Civil War denied the rights of states to freely leave the union in dramatic fashion. The idea of federal unity had been seeping into the consciousness as early as 1754, when Benjamin Franklin urged colonial unity in his famous "Join, or Die" cartoon.

Why did Congress feel the need to officially declare a name? Well, it was more than cosmetics. The galvanization and unanimous decision by the colonies to break away was important in demonstrating resolve and strength to the British. The British—from the King all the way to local Tory commissioners—still regarded America as separate, rebellious colonies. The new name gave our field generals as well as diplomats legitimacy to speak on behalf of the collective with both Britain and potential allies like France.

From then on, we were the United States of America and congressional delegates represented an entire and independent nation, not the narrow interests of its composite colonies. When Congress sent Benjamin Franklin, John Adams, and Edward Rutledge to meet Admiral Lord Richard Howe to discuss peace, they represented all. Likewise, when Franklin, Adams and Jefferson went to Paris to court France, they represented a nation, not a confederation of individual colonies.

Access the post: https://www.facebook.com/story.php?story_fbid=122266271024251942&id=61557558280239&mibextid=wwXlfr&rdid=ITB1A4jIEuyVnUpy#

How A Nation Shaped By Biblical Truth Turned Into A Nation That Has Cast Aside The Influence Of The Church

By Breanna Claussen originally published in Harbinger's Daily (September 7 2026)

What happens when the church fails to be "salt" to the surrounding culture? The Biblical answer is straightforward. Jesus said in Matthew 5:13, "You are the salt of the earth; but if the salt loses its flavor, how shall it be seasoned? It is then good for nothing but to be thrown out and trampled underfoot by men."

In the United States, the church once had remarkable influence. The nation was heavily shaped by Biblical values, God-given freedoms, and a government and judicial structure gleaned from God's Word.

British evangelist George Whitefield is considered one of America's "spiritual founding fathers." Pastor Greg Laurie, in his article, "The Legacies of Two Georges," emphasized the impact of the Gospel message in laying the groundwork for the nation.

"Between 1740 and 1742, before the United States was even a nation, the Great Awakening had a remarkable impact in New England," he detailed. "Historians estimate that 25,000 to 50,000 people were added to New England church membership as a result of the revival. With New England's population only around 300,000 at the time, that means as many as one out of every six people in the region may have been reached in some way by the revival, in which George Whitefield played a leading role. The evangelistic wildfire left in its wake fertile spiritual ground on which the nation could be built. The Christian truths and principles that guided the lives of the new converts found their way into the nation's DNA. They formed the cornerstone of the United States government."

From its founding, national leadership understood the critical need to recognize God and safeguard religious liberty; it was for this reason that America's third President, Thomas Jefferson, wrote a letter to the Danbury Baptists, who were being persecuted by the state of Connecticut. It was from this letter that the words "building a wall of separation between Church & State" were first mentioned.

As noted by the legal group First Liberty, *"In context, it's clear this wall of separation was not created to keep religion out of the State. It was simply intended to protect religious freedom and to place boundaries on the State's control over the Church."*

Today, the words *"separation between Church & State"* have been stripped of all their original meaning. The phrase intended to prevent the government from stifling the church has been warped to insist that the church *must be stifled* from exerting any influence in government and the direction of political culture.

This twisted assertion gained steam in the 1950s when the Johnson Amendment prohibited 501(c)(3) tax-exempt nonprofit organizations, including ministries and churches, from endorsing or participating in political campaigns (a flagrant defiance of Thomas Jefferson's words).

Seeing the effectiveness of the ruse, people wielding *"separation of Church and State"* banners have increasingly used the phrase to argue against any form of direct Christian involvement in government—such as prayer, Biblical references, and acknowledgment of God.

What began as a nation shaped by Biblical truth, Christian conviction, and evangelism turned into a nation that has cast aside the voice of the church.

Far from pushing back, the response of numerous Christian leaders was to willingly surrender their influence in the political sphere altogether and forgo any discussion of topics labeled as "political" by society—even deeply Biblical issues.

Many, including entire denominations, have justified their lack of societal influence, arguing that this inversion of the "separation of Church and State" is a Biblical position. "God never called us to involve ourselves in the affairs of worldly nations!" Nothing could be further from the truth.

Consider the influence God gave to:

- Joseph and Moses with the pharaohs of Egypt.
- Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah with the kings of Babylon.
- Esther, Mordecai, and Nehemiah with the Kings of Persia.
- Elijah, Isaiah, Jeremiah, and other prophets with the Kings of Israel and Judah.
- The apostle Paul with the leadership of the Roman Empire.

These Biblical examples, and many more, demonstrate God's desire for His word to reach and influence the leadership of nations, and how He uses His servants to deliver the message.

Even the more-than-a-little-reluctant prophet Jonah was used to warn the city of Nineveh, resulting in a decree by "the king and his nobles," which read: *"Do not let people or animals, herds or flocks, taste anything; do not let them eat or drink. But let people and animals be covered with sackcloth. Let everyone call urgently on God. Let them give up their evil ways and their violence. Who knows? God may yet relent and with compassion turn from his fierce anger so that we will not perish."*

Because of the church's extraordinary influence in early America, such decrees occurred frequently in the United States. President Abraham Lincoln called for a national day of "humiliation, fasting, and prayer" in response to the Civil War, as did James Buchanan in the lead-up to the Civil War, Zachary Taylor in response to a mass cholera outbreak, George Washington in response to the War of Independence, and other Presidents. Even Thomas Jefferson, the one who wrote the words *"separation between Church & State,"* called for a day of fasting, humiliation, and prayer during the British blockade of the Boston Harbor.



A national day of prayer in modern America was spearheaded by evangelist Billy Graham, who in 1952 pressed Congress to formally set aside a day of recognition and calling out to God.

"We are re-affirming our faith in the God of our Fathers... confessing our need of a Savior from our sin... and in humiliation and repentance beseeching Him to cleanse us from all unrighteousness," Graham said on the east steps of the Capitol building before tens of thousands in attendance and millions more watching at home.

It was two short years later when the Johnson Amendment would be introduced, taking direct aim at the influence of churches and ministry leaders on the nation. While many maintained their boldness, others shrank back and twisted the Bible to justify their silence.

The church's impact on America has been integral to the nation's success.

The United States may be the most vivid example demonstrating the blessing of the church rightly taking hold of its responsibility to be "salt," and the devastating consequence when the "salt" fails in its preserving role. As Jesus said, the consequence of the latter is to become "good for nothing"... "thrown out and trampled underfoot by men."

Christians should care about the direction of the nation in which they live. Proverbs 14:34 states, "Righteousness exalts a nation, but sin is a reproach to any people." In which direction should the church be drawing a nation? Will we boldly call the nation back to righteous Biblical recognition, or will we be silent as people, politicians, and leaders careen away from God?

As stated at the beginning of this article, the Biblical answer is straightforward.

Breanna Claussen is the Founder, President, and Editor-in-Chief of Harbinger's Daily, working with ministries across the globe to educate and equip believers to stand boldly with a Biblical worldview.

Access the article: <https://harbingersdaily.com/how-a-nation-shaped-by-biblical-truth-turned-into-a-nation-that-has-cast-aside-the-influence-of-the-church/>

Opening The Door To An Ideology That Revels In Chaos, Violence, And Reshaping The Fabric Of Societies

By Breanna Claussen originally published in Harbinger's Daily (August 10 2026)

Disastrous open border policies have wreaked havoc across Europe and Western Nations. The globalist rhetoric that caused nations to open their doors in the name of "inclusion" and "acceptance" has had disastrous consequences—predominantly, and unsurprisingly, the undermining of national sovereignty.

Nations have allowed themselves to be flooded with countless Muslim immigrants, not to build a better life, but to spread an ideology that revels in chaos, violence, and reshaping the fabric of societies.

Islamic politicians, public figures, and protesters regularly express their disdain for the Judeo-Christian foundation of Western society. Far from being patriotic toward the nations they have been accepted into, Muslim ideology insists that wherever they set foot belongs to them, and demands an overhaul to be brought under the subjection of Islamic law—by any means necessary. It was these very beliefs—centered around conquering—that resulted in muslim populations being expelled from countries throughout history.

Many nations not only willfully ignore this reality, they also take "acceptance" a step further, adopting broad "Islamophobia" laws that have made Islam untouchable from public criticism.

An Oxford Union debate addressing the question: "Is the West right to be suspicious of Islam?" recently went viral across social media. The debate became a public spectacle as participants were met by hordes of Muslim protesters outside, outraged by the topic that was chosen, uttering threats against those who entered.

Startlingly, Aisha Khan, a student arguing on behalf of Muslims during the debate, declared that her opponent, Tommy Robinson, should be grateful that the mob wasn't allowed to harm him.

"There is a crowd outside rioting against you tonight, and without the protection and generosity of a Muslim Palestinian president and a largely South Asian executive committee, you would be quite literally cooked," she insisted to loud applause.

The Head of Public Policy for the Christian Legal Center, Tim Dieppe, responded to the woman's remarks: "This is an extraordinary statement. She seems to be boasting that Tommy's life was in danger from Islamic protestors, whilst arguing that the West should not be suspicious of Islam! Furthermore, she essentially claims that were it not for the generosity of the Muslim students, Tommy would have been killed. Is Tommy supposed to be grateful? Astonishingly, the audience applauded at this. What were they applauding? The generous support of Muslims in allowing Tommy to live? Or the fact that the crowd



wanted him dead? Are we supposed to be grateful to Muslims for allowing people to live now? Is that why we should not be suspicious of Islam?"

In the United States, the popularity of Islamic politicians in the Democrat Party, like NYC Mayor Zohran Mamdani, is growing at an alarming rate, expanding the already dangerous level of anti-American, anti-Christian, and antisemitic rhetoric in the nation.

Rejecting mass Muslim immigration is not "hateful" or "racist"—and it does not run contrary to our desire as Christians for these individuals to be reached with the truth of the Gospel. Rejecting mass Muslim immigration is grounded in Biblical wisdom.

God established borders with a purpose. In the case of ancient Israel, God instructed them to be welcoming to strangers, with an important caveat: that the individuals they allow to live in their nation assimilate. That is a critical distinction. Why? Because accepting individuals with ideologies contrary—or actively opposed—to the moral foundation of a nation will inevitably reshape the culture.

Breanna Claussen is the Founder, President, and Editor-in-Chief of Harbinger's Daily, working with ministries across the globe to educate and equip believers to stand boldly with a Biblical worldview.

Access the article: <https://harbingersdaily.com/opening-the-door-to-an-ideology-that-revels-in-chaos-violence-and-reshaping-the-fabric-of-societies/>

Ban Sharia

A shared commitment to America's constitutional Republic.

[BanSharia.com](https://bansharia.com) is a joint project of scores of influential American patriots, subject matter experts, national security professionals and organizations committed to our constitutional Republic, the freedoms it guarantees and the Western civilization it underpins. We are committed to exposing the toxic threat sharia represents to all we hold dear and preventing its adherents from achieving their goal of imposing it – violently or stealthily – on the rest of us.

RELEASE: A Time For Choosing Freedom Over Slavery

PRESS RELEASE originally published in BanSharia.com (September 2 2026)

For Immediate Release: September 2, 2026

Dozens of Leading Freedom-fighters Urge President Trump to Use the GOP Convention to Restore the Republican Party's Brand, Excite Voters by Adopting a Platform of "Freedom Over Slavery"

WASHINGTON, D.C.— A letter signed by four-dozen legislators and leaders of many of America's most important patriotic organizations was sent today to President Trump with a powerful recommendation about next week's **Midterm Republican National Committee Convention** in Dallas. Building upon Mr. Trump's commendable focus on the threat posed by Communists inside the United States and his declared commitment to prohibiting Islam's toxic strategy for conquest known as "sharia," the signatories called on him to seize the opportunity to restore the GOP to its historical roots as **the party of freedom** even as the Democratic one is again manifesting its embrace *and enabling* of **slavery**.

After all, what Marxists and sharia-supremacists have in common – in addition to their shared commitment to destroying our country – is the totalitarian ambition to enslave populations they conquer. With the elevation of Communists doing business as "Democratic Socialists of America" and jihadists tied to the Muslim Brotherhood and other champions of sharia – radical forces that together comprise a dangerous "Red-Green axis" – as not only core Democrat constituencies, but actual candidates for high office, the contrast between the parties could not be stronger.

Among the signatories on this joint letter are: three prominent Texas congressmen – House Sharia-Free Caucus co-founder and co-chairman **Keith Self** and **Reps. Brian Babin** and **Randy Weber**; **Debra Burlingame**, the sister of **Capt. "Chick" Burlingame** whose aircraft was seized and flown into the Pentagon on 9/11; foreign-born American patriot and former Muslim **Ayaan Hirsi Ali**; senior executives of influential grassroots and other organizations, including, the **Association of Mature American Citizens**, **ACT for America**, **Moms for America**, **Intercessors for America**, **Citizens Defending Freedom**, **Conservative HQ**, **Eagle Forum**, **Patriot Academy**, and **Liberty Pastors**; and a number of subject matter experts.

Of particular importance are the following paragraphs from the joint letter to the President:

The upcoming **Midterm RNC Convention** presents a truly **Providential opportunity** to showcase such messaging. We stand ready to help amplify the propositions that this election is, as Ronald Reagan memorably put it, "**a time for**

choosing” and that patriots of every political affiliation must turn out this Fall and **vote for freedom over slavery.**

We urge you to make our choice of freedom a key plank in what can effectively be **a defining, national and winning platform in the elections across America this November.**

The opportunity presented by the Midterm Convention in Dallas next week to give patriotic American citizens compelling reasons to vote, and thereby change the trajectory of our country from one of possibly terminal submission to the “Red-Green axis” to a *rebirth of freedom*, must be promptly seized and actualized as fully as possible.

CONTACTS: For more information about the menace of sharia, Communism and the Red-Green axis, visit [BanSharia.com](https://www.bansharia.com).

Access the Press Release: <https://www.bansharia.com/release-a-time-for-choosing-freedom-over-slavery/>

Video: Save America - Ban Sharia

The object of the Campaign is to ban sharia in this country, starting in Texas.

Watch video (September 29 2026, 2mins): <https://www.bansharia.com/save-america-ban-sharia/>



Ban Sharia Series: Episode 2: Halal

Sharia-compliant finance (SCF) refers to investments and financial deals structured to be considered “halal” (permissible) under sharia.

Watch this episode (August 14 2026, 1min 42secs): <https://www.bansharia.com/episode-02-halal-ban-sharia-series/>



Webinar: Sharia vs. the Constitution: Only One Can be the Supreme Law of the Land

Thursday, July 30, 2026 – 4:00–5:15 p.m. ET

A critical question of our time is: Will the United States join Europe and much of the rest of the world in submitting to sharia – Islam’s political-military-legal strategy for conquest? If that were to happen, the American people would have a new supreme law of the land – the brutally repressive totalitarian code rooted in the Quran and the life experience, directives and model of the so-called “perfect man,” Mohammed.

To comprehend just how different such a system of governance and nation would be, it is necessary to compare and contrast sharia with the Constitution. This BanSharia.com webinar provides such an analysis, together with a conversation about the implications of the stark differences between the two arising from the evisceration of the God-endowed freedoms guaranteed by the U.S. Constitution and, in their stead, the brutal, institutionalized repression that is mandated by sharia.

Moderator: • **Frank Gaffney**, President, Institute for the American Future; Vice Chairman, Committee on the Present Danger: China; host, “Securing America”

Panelists: • **Alex Newman**, president of the Liberty Sentinel Media; award-winning international journalist; educator; author of, among other works, *Deep State: Invisible Government Behind the Scenes*
• **Rev. Paul Blair**, Senior Pastor, Fairview Baptist Church, Edmond, Oklahoma and Liberty Church, Orlando, Florida; President of Reclaiming America for Christ; and founder, Liberty Pastors Network and Liberty Pastor Training Camps.’



- **Elizabeth Yore, Esq.**, international child protection attorney specializing in the investigation of missing, abducted, and exploited children; founder, Yore Children; former General Counsel for the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services; former, General Counsel and Director of the International Division at the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children (NCMEC)
- **Dr. Karen Siegemund**, President, American Freedom Alliance; thought-leader in the War for the Free World
- **Usama Dakdok**, President, Straight Way of Grace; author of, *Exposing the Truth about Jihad: Holy War in the Bible* (Vol. 1) and *Unholy War in the Koran* (Vol. 2)

Watch the recording (1hr 7mins 51secs): <https://www.bansharia.com/webinar-sharia-vs-the-constitution/>

Top 10 U.S. States With The Largest Muslim Populations

Source: <https://www.halaltimes.com/10-most-muslim-states-in-the-us/>

Summary Table: Top 10 U.S. States by Muslim Population

Rank	State	Estimated Muslim Population	% of State Population	Mosques (2020)
1	New York	724,475	3.62%	343
2	California	504,056	1.28%	304
3	Illinois	473,792	3.77%	109
4	New Jersey	321,652	3.34%	141
5	Texas	313,209	1.06%	224
6	Michigan	241,828	2.37%	95+
7	Maryland	188,914	3.10%	70+
8	Virginia	169,371	2.00%	80+
9	Pennsylvania	149,561	1.15%	70+
10	Massachusetts	131,749	1.80%	50+

Never Forget

"Never Forget" By Chad Prather (Official Music Video)

Watch and listen to this new song to help restore our nation's reverence for the victims of 9/11 (3mins 25secs): <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SVzft-8LMmU>



The Day Has Come

By Ivan Pentchoukov originally published in *The Epoch Times* (September 10 2026)

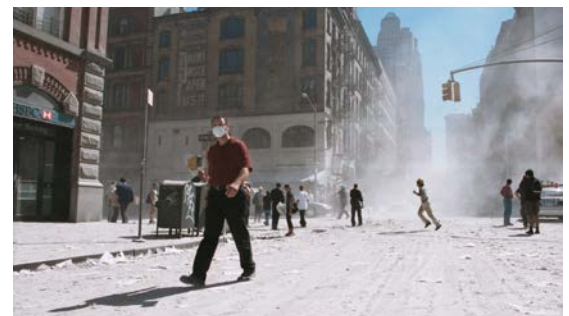
Commentary

Deep in my bones, I still remember the impact of the jetliners.

The tremor that shook the windowless building of our high school across the street from the twin towers felt like a minor earthquake.

Mr. Capo, our energetic accounting teacher, stopped the lesson mid-sentence and sat down at his desk. The class fell quiet.

How did the jitters hush a class of teenagers who would usually take over if a teacher disengaged? Did the vibrations that traveled down the steel beams of the north tower, into the ground below, and up to our room carry in them the last heartbeats and agony of the souls that perished above?



An unidentified man with a face mask walks on an ash-covered street near Ground Zero after the collapse of the twin towers in New York City on Sept. 11, 2001. Anthony Correia /Getty Images

The principal's voice on the intercom broke the silence.

"We are going to shelter in place," he said, likely not realizing that none of us knew what was going on. The top two floors of the building had windows, and he saw what we didn't.

If it was quiet before, now it was ominous. I closed my eyes and rested my head on the desk.

The school trembled again, sharply this time. The south tower was just 500 feet from our building at 100 Trinity Place. I didn't believe in the unseen at the time, but that tremor carried with it a cold, electric pulse of anxiety. As I kept my eyes closed, images flashed before me of feet clad in heels, and sneakers, and black leather oxfords running in terror over the polished floor of the mall beneath the towers.

I knew the spot where all these feet rushed by. I passed by it every morning with the crowd of commuters who poured out of the turnstiles from the A, C, and E trains. I had bought strawberry-banana smoothies from Mrs. Fields Pretzel Time here after school. I wonder whether the lady who worked there made it out alive.

The principal was on the intercom again. "Line up against the wall outside the classrooms," we were told. We filed out and stood in silence with our backs to the walls. Messages crackled over the radios of the security guards, and we were told to go down the fire escape.

The stairwell had steel safety bars separating us from the outside. A surreal rain of ash and paper came down steadily, on and on. It had wafted onto the landings and the stairs.

As we came out onto Thames Street, we were met with the figure of a soot-stained, ash-covered firefighter, collapsed in a motionless heap on the curb, staring into space. After years of risking his life, after rushing into a burning skyscraper, what did he see that stunned him so? From stories from those who were near the buildings that day, I think that I know.

The teachers corralled us down Thames Street toward Greenwich Street, where the burning towers would come in full view and where I would experience what psychologists call peritraumatic dissociation and micropsia. Instead of seeing the full view of the disaster, my field of vision became a black canvas, in the center of which a tiny black-and-white television showed the footage of the towers burning. I had the sense that I could turn its controls to change the channel.

My buddy Mohammed patted me on the back and shook me out of it. I now saw the towers burning in full frame, debris snowing down, fire and smoke roaring. The school staff hustled us away, downtown on Greenwich Street toward Battery Park.

The English teacher told a group of us that this was a terrorist attack and that planes had crashed into both towers. Mohammed and I had a bright idea. We'd split from the group and go see the airplanes sticking out from the other side of the buildings. We broke off and headed to Broadway, which was abandoned except for our gym teacher, his hands on his waist.

He asked where we were going. We told him about our plan. I thought that he might join us.

He said, "You guys are [expletive] stupid." He may have saved our lives. In roughly the amount of time it would have taken to walk to Ground Zero, the south tower collapsed.

We watched the dust wave race up Greenwich Street toward the park, and then we were engulfed, and everyone panicked. We ran into the park, feeling ahead of us as it was hard to see. The class clown, Freddy, followed another kid who crawled under a bench.

We grasped around the park until we found the river and sat there with nowhere to go to flee the cloud. As the dust settled, the Statue of Liberty rose in the distance. I had an intense fear that they would hit the statue next.

Someone said, "This is war."

Small ships and ferries began to arrive and pick up some of the crowd stuck in the park. The only way out was by water.

Mohammed lived in Queens, and I lived uptown. None of the ships were going our way.

So we stuck around. We watched the second tower fall, and another cloud of dust engulfed the park. We made face masks out of our T-shirts. A man with a van showed up and passed out water, Band-Aids, and gauze. All of the ferries were going to New Jersey, but after a while, The Screamer, a tourist speedboat, pulled beside us and the captain asked whether we'd like to get on. I asked where they were going. The captain looked at me like I was the most ridiculous kid on Earth and said, "Chelsea Piers." We got on.

The eight-or-so of us were all covered in the dust and ashes from the towers. The captain gave us life vests. He said he would go slow for us and steered uptown. The Screamer sailed in silence.

I walked east on 23rd Street and caught the subway home to Washington Heights.

I still remember the tears of our chemistry teacher. Before the first tower collapsed, we ran into him, a small-statured man who was passionate about his job. He was leaning against a wall with two streams of tears steadily running down his face and wetting the top half of his shirt. I asked him why he was crying. He said he'd realized that hundreds of people had died in the towers that day.

It would be a long time until my psyche let a genuine emotion like this surface. I dealt with the shock mostly in nightmares in the years that followed. When our building was dug out of the rubble six months later, I looked the other way while ducking through the crowd of gawkers who came to see the pile.

I still can't bring myself to visit the 9/11 Memorial. I sense that when I look at the reflecting pools I will be like my chemistry teacher for the first time. After 25 years, I feel the day has come.

Views expressed in this article are opinions of the author and do not necessarily reflect the views of The Epoch Times.

Access the article: https://www.theepochtimes.com/opinion/the-day-has-come-6076660?ea_src=frontpage&ea_med=section-2

What Made Them Do Their Duty?

By Victor Davis Hanson originally published in The Blade of Perseus (September 11 2026)

Note: This article originally appeared in the Autumn 2001 issue of City Journal

From the very first moments of the World Trade Center horror, the valor and élan of New York's firemen, together with that of the city's police and emergency forces, have transfixed the whole nation—especially us in rural America who rarely see the real Gotham. Danger was nothing to them, courage and honor everything. They responded instantly to the explosion and fire, all drawn to, rather than repelled by, the inferno—and without regard to their own safety or the consequences of their possible incineration upon their loved ones at home. We now know their last radio cries: "Move away from the towers! Everyone move away from the towers!" Silence. . . .



As the ghastly rubble gets turned over, we find their remains in clusters—four incinerated here, ten buried there, 14 caught en masse in a stairwell, where they had guided the panicked down as they themselves ascended to their deaths: "All nonessential personnel move away from that building!" The antithesis, left unsaid, is obvious: "All necessary rescuers get into that building!"

So many of them disappeared—at least 388 firefighters—because in a heartbeat they chose to race into the flames and smoke rather than to hesitate and accept the obvious: that the towers were already death traps. In the tradition of all great American armies in battle, officers—47 lieutenants, 20 captains, and 21 chiefs—died alongside the rank and file, heroic death requiring no prerequisite of class or color. Indeed, the magnitude of the terrorist-inflicted disaster rivaled that of a fierce battle, where the enemy overruns and annihilates an entire military unit—paramedics, a fire marshal, even the fire department's chaplain were engulfed. Remarkably, moments after the buildings collapsed, there were even more rescue workers on the scene than before. It is human to flee from a place of death; the firemen and the police were almost inhuman in mounting so quickly the rubble that buried their brethren.

As terrible as their loss was, however, we must never forget how successful the rescuers actually were. Nearly 30,000 people escaped before the towers fell, in large part because the omnipresent cops and firefighters made sure that their own sense of calm and order guided the evacuation. Some of the saved made it out just seconds before thousands of tons buried their saviors on stairs and in hallways.

Now, for these past few weeks, the nation has watched these brave men and women, joined by construction and sanitation workers, as they search for the victims, always overturning the debris and moving beams with care to avoid harming potential survivors or further violating the deceased. Finding one of their own dead, they carry him out on flag-draped stretchers, with ceremony and protocol. Then they return to the rubble, paying less attention to collapsing concrete, unexpected bursts of flame, and razor-sharp twisted steel than to their powerful sense of fraternal obligation.

It is impossible not to admire their selflessness. Inhaling what was once the World Trade Center, both human and inanimate, they do not bother to debate—as many fearful people have done in the wake of the attacks—what might be the best brand of gas mask to don. They are not calibrating their chances of survival in threatened future gas attacks, because they're already breathing a sort of awful gas in the here and now.

The rescuers' selflessness is always evident in their interactions with the press and media. As television crews shove cameras in their faces and microphones under their blackened chins, they respond with tact, worrying mostly that their Herculean efforts are not enough—that they won't bring the dead back to life. We catch an occasional "Good work, brother," or a "Don't worry, we are going to get everybody out," or a polite "We can't talk now, just work until it's over and we've brought them out."

Sometimes the contrast between the brave rescue workers and their occasionally hysterical observers among the chattering classes is glaring. Nightline's Ted Koppel listens to the last radio transmissions of those caught in the collapse and asks: "Why were they so confused, why were the radios so bad?" We wince and sigh: "Because a million tons of concrete and steel were showering down on their heads!"

The rescuers' simple patriotism offers another favorable contrast with some of their elite observers. We do not hear from New York's heroic firemen and police any sophisticated nonsense that we brought the two towers crashing down upon ourselves because of our arrogance or imperial political ambitions. They do not tell us that we must change our sinful ways and abandon our friends. I don't think most of them give a damn what a Frenchman or a Palestinian says about our ordeal. Most seem to accept that a magnificent city such as theirs, in a nation as free and humane as their own, naturally invites the envy of lesser people and thus must be defended from those who hate what we are rather than anything we have done. Seeing the rescuers display their patriotism at Ground Zero, where they have carefully displayed American flags and patriotic slogans, swells one's own national pride.

These selfless, patriotic men and women project a physical presence that harks back to an earlier age—one largely unseen on the national scene for the last half-century. Muscular, tireless despite constant movement, a quiet confidence in corporeal strength—it is as if they stepped out of depression-era post-office murals or faded watercolors in long-defunct magazines.

Their robust physicality seems less the product of the health club or plastic surgeon's office than of hard and dirty work. The younger workers look like—no, look better than—athletes, their biceps built not for play but for carrying hoses and scaling ladders. Their ongoing labor seems to magnify their physical presence; in comparison, the ripples and contours of professional athletes now look oddly artificial. Some working in the rubble—overweight, smoking, sweating profusely—hardly look fit, of course. But using ample bellies as wedges and levers against the stones and steel, they remind America that you can be tough as nails and still be deemed out of shape.

Even their unit names seem to belong to a different, older era—"Ladder 28," "Squad 41," "Rescue 1." They remind one of the first wave of torpedo bombers, wiped out nearly to the man at the Battle of Midway, whose planes, bearing names like "Torpedo 6" and "Scouting 8," drew fire from Japanese Zeros, so that U.S. dive bombers, flying above them, could attack unmolested the now vulnerable enemy carriers below. These days, we might have expected the nomenclature of the rescue units to be something like "Integrated Systems Protection" or "Specialized Reaction and Control." That the unit names are so old-fashioned suggests that the rescue workers remain in some profound sense faithful to custom and tradition.

There is a lesson that the heroic dead and their courageous brethren at Ground Zero can offer to the elites and intellectuals who often look down on, or simply ignore, the concrete, physical world that forms the rescuers' daily milieu. What strikes many of us from outside New York who visit the city, after all, is how it all works. How do tons of water, food, and fuel enter the city every day, along with millions of commuters? Where do the sewage, trash, and litter all go? And in such cramped confines, how do people not kill and maim one another by the hour?

Now we have proof of what we've suspected all along: that "regular" New Yorkers like these, showing enormous versatility, make it all work. The concrete canyons of the city have not enervated their audacity, strength, and cunning, but have sharpened them in ways we could scarcely imagine. Any of us on America's farms or in its factories or mines who thought New Yorkers soft now realize how mistaken we were. The rescuers, it turns out, could easily drive tractors, ride horses, or dig in mines, if their duty was not to brave flames and catch criminals.

Indeed, many of the rescuers exemplify a Hellenic balance. These firemen and cops, like the Greeks, innately understand that muscles matched with mind are essential to our collective flourishing and safety. This balance, I think, underlies the steady confidence that the surviving rescuers show when they speak of responding to the September 11 attack. Their voices remain calm, never frightened; they are not crying out blindly for revenge for their brothers. They talk—often incisively—of a slow, growing, and enduring response that accords with their own very American sense of fairness, righteous indignation, and humanity: "They will pay for this, you'll see."

I would not wish to meet people such as these in battle. Yet I think the Taliban and their henchmen face in our military forces just such people. Everywhere, we hear warnings to be cautious and afraid; but I think it is our enemies, not us, who have real cause for worry, for until now they have only struck at the innocent and unaware. Now they must confront the spiritual kin of the rescuers.

Brave, selfless, patriotic, strong, and versatile—no wonder these public servants seem to bring out the best in those who cross their paths. Where do such marvelous people come from? Doubtless part of the answer has to do with the clannish ties of many of the rescuers, who, like farmers and miners, often feel more comfortable living among their own (frequently near their parents) and working alongside siblings and cousins. A striking number of them were Catholic. One Staten Island Catholic high school lost 23 alumni on September 11—about half of them cops or firemen. Such benevolent tribalism—that one should not be a walking and transient résumé but find worth instead among family, community, and a grandfather's profession—can be a powerful force for good, whatever its potential limitations. Military historians tell us, for example, that the key to group cohesiveness and fighting spirit in any good army is the regimental system, based on the idea that soldiers—and these firefighters and cops are surely that—battle better together when arrayed alongside neighbors and friends in a common purpose.

The existence of these virtuous men and women, however, also owes much to the universal genius of American—Western—civilization. We are seeing in this tragedy and in these firemen and police, alive and dead, the flesh and bones of our entire culture laid bare: what it means to be both American and Western at the moment of our peril and need.

Consider the ease with which the workers operate the huge cranes and bulldozers that remove the World Trade Center rubble—and consider the machines themselves. Only a civilization like that of the West, steeped in the rationalist tradition and protected by freedom of inquiry, could invent and use such remarkable equipment. The busy activity at Ground Zero reminds us how the Hoover Dam arose so speedily, how in World War II the wrecked Yorktown was made as good as new in mere hours, and why both earthquake and hurricane fail to level our cities permanently.

The rescuers are also free men and women, exhibiting all the associational skills that have made civil society so vibrant in Western history. The rescue workers do not first look to central government authority before plunging into their daily toil. Ingenuity, improvisation, and spontaneity are everywhere—the wonderful fruits of a free society. In addition, the police who ring the site owe allegiance to civilians and elected officials, not self-proclaimed authorities who hang and hector as they see fit. Our enemies brag of the brutal order of the chopped hand and stoned face: let them come to New York and see how much better and more humane are free guardians than thugs obeying the ravings of a mendicant fanatic.

Could New York's free rescuers be any more different from the city's attackers? New York's suicidal enemies demand adherence to their religious creed and are more likely to be of a regimented mind and even hue. The firemen and cops, conversely, are of all colors and faiths. The names of the dead—Michael Weinberg, Manuel Mojica, Paddy Brown, Joseph Angelini, Gerald Schrang, Tarel Coleman—sound scripted from corny World War II movies. Yet the diversity is not corny but real—far more real than Hollywood fantasies or the resentful multiculturalism of the politicized campus. By all accounts, these men worked in relative harmony alongside one another even as they expressed pride in their ethnic heritage—a fertile, and particularly American, tension of the universal and the particular.

We are discovering, ultimately, the West's powerful advantage of having three, rather than two, classes—the critical presence in society of men and women who are neither terribly rich nor abjectly poor, who own property yet struggle mightily to acquire and keep it.

This middle class is not the norm of the world, either today or in the past, which was and is likely to remain pyramidal: a small elite tottering at the peak, dictating to an impoverished and restless mass below, as one now finds in Afghanistan and Iraq. The independent and resourceful of New York are what we would expect of a hallowed tradition that goes back to the Greeks, whose civilization arose on the backs of the mesoi—the “middle ones,” who were neither rich nor poor, neither dispossessed nor royalty. As property-owning, voting citizens, the mesoi created and sustained our culture, which explains why their descendants, on their own initiative, rushed into the flames and now find and care for our dead—and will quickly rebuild what the terrorists destroyed.

Make no mistake: a horrific catastrophe has struck New York. A trillion dollars has vanished from its markets, and repairing damage to the city's structures will cost at least \$40 billion. The loss of human treasure is incalculable. And like it or not, we are in a real war. But the firefighters, police, and other rescue workers have proven an invaluable asset. Their heroic conduct in the present crisis will change the nature of New York, teaching many in the city's vast offices that hefty salaries don't mean much if one does not help one's kin and do so with honor and courage. What has gone on in the rubble should be as reassuring a sight for our friends as it is ominous for our foes.

Access the article: <https://victorhanson.com/what-made-them-do-their-duty-2/>

Remembering 9/11 And The Unreal Moments Of The 1990s

By Kevin Mooney originally published in Restoration News (September 11 2026)

Revisionist history is taking hold 25 years later.

Just a few days before the 9/11 terrorist attacks, the conversation turned to the Bush-Gore presidential election of 2000—and the conversation turned heated.

So much so that the bartenders had to temporarily step in and remind us that we were friends. What were we arguing about? Foreign policy was not front and center since the Cold War was a distant memory. This was about election integrity, “hanging chads,” the role of the judiciary, the ethics of former President Bill Clinton in the White House, the utility of tax cuts, and the federal government's role in education. Terrorism did not come up. But we did touch on the challenges of illegal immigration, a topic just beginning to brew at the time.

This all went down during Labor Day weekend in New York City, at an Irish dive bar in lower Manhattan. George W. Bush, the Republican governor of Texas, famously won over Vice President Al Gore, the Democrat who had served under Clinton for eight years.



But my friend “Francisco,” who knew the city and its dive bar community inside and out, insisted the popular vote should be the one that counts, and Bush narrowly lost the popular vote after prevailing in the Electoral College. In his mind, the U.S. Supreme Court ruling that brought an end to the chaotic recounts in Florida was a national scandal.

After 36 days of intense legal disputes and agonizing ballot recounts, Bush finally managed to pull in the crucial swing state by a mere 537 votes. But in the summer of 2001, the new president was still struggling to unite the country. After leaving our location on Cedar Street, we made our way to the World Trade Center to catch a train back to Jersey City. The conversation quickly turned to “Seinfeld,” “The X-Files,” and “The Sopranos,” all shows in their heyday or perhaps near the end of their heyday at the turn of the century.

The city was relatively quiet and empty that Labor Day in 2001, just like it was this year. It was also bright, sunny, and peaceful, just like it was this year. Francisco and I were both unhappy with our boring, corporate jobs and looking to move on. We had been colleagues at Forbes Newspapers in Somerville, New Jersey, where we began our journalism careers.

Yes, Steve Forbes, the magazine publisher and businessman, owned a newspaper chain he inherited from his father. Forbes had to sell the chain when he ran for president in 1996. Yet, we had fun while covering the political intrigue of local municipalities and school boards in our first jobs out of college. We miss those days; moreover, we miss the unreal placidity of the 1990s. History may have been on a holiday after the Berlin Wall fell, but the corruption in the “Soprano State” gave us plenty of opportunities to have fun.

Rediscovering the Post 9/11 George W. Bush in the Age of Mayor Mamdani

That Labor Day in 2001, Francisco and I made our way back to the very popular “Commuter Bar” in the World Trade Center’s concourse near the Port Authority Trans-Hudson, or PATH, Station. It was strange to see this hopping spot closed, but it was a holiday, and it was time to make our way back to Jersey City.

In a few days, the Commuter Bar we repeatedly visited would be beneath tons of rubble along with the rest of the World Trade Center. The president—elected in one of the closest, most divisive elections in U.S. history—would become a unifying figure, and the country would be at war. In many ways, the months that followed were as good as they were painful. There was a resurgence of patriotism, a renewed appreciation for the founding period, and a willingness to confront radical Islam.

Some images that stand out include President Bush standing on top of the ruins at Ground Zero after the attacks on New York City. He placed himself on top of a crushed fire truck with his arm around a retired firefighter named Bob Beckwith and began to speak with a handheld bullhorn. When the crowd said, “We can’t hear you!” Bush shouted back: “I can hear you, the rest of the world hears you, and the people who knocked these buildings down will hear all of us soon!” A few weeks later “GW” would also throw out the first pitch during Game Three of the World Series at Yankee Stadium.

Probably a stadium filled with mostly registered Democrats? But they were Clinton-era Democrats who came rushing back to the political center when the moment called for it. By and large, they do not exist anymore. In fact, some prominent Democrats such as Abdul El-Sayed, the party’s U.S. Senate candidate in Michigan, appear to have come close to embracing the 9/11 attacks before a politically forced backpedal. Others have operated more on the sly, but they remain every bit as devoted to a far-left anti-American agenda. Zohran Mamdani stands at the top of that list. Even so, the Muslim mayor of New York City, elected in November 2025, does occasionally drop the mask, like he did last Friday during a 9/11 ceremony at City Hall.

Mamdani, at the ceremony, passed the pen he used to Ramzi Kassem, his chief counsel. This matters because Kassem spent several years working as a civilian defense counsel for Ahmed al-Darbi, a Guantanamo detainee and al Qaeda operative who pled guilty in 2002 to terrorist exercises. The 9/11 connections run deep since al-Darbi’s sister was married to Khalid al-Mihdhar, one of the five hijackers aboard American Airlines Flight 77, which hit the Pentagon on 9/11. The attack resulted in the deaths of 59 innocent people on the plane and 125 military personnel and civilians in the Pentagon.

Blogger JD Rucker describes why the passing of the pen to Kassem was not some “clerical accident” but was instead a “staged insult to the dead” delivered exactly one week before the 25th anniversary of 9/11. The moral clarity that held sway in the months immediately following the attacks has, over time, given way to phony concepts like “Islamophobia” designed to shield violent actors from legitimate criticism and scrutiny. There’s also a resurgent Marxism alive among America’s youth that swaps out the original version’s emphasis on class with ethnicity. Remember, unlike Karl Marx, today’s leftists are not living in the poor house. From billionaire investor George Soros to Sen. Bernie Sanders (D-VT), Rep. Ilhan Omar (D-MN.), and Gov. Gavin Newsom (D-CA), to name a few contemporary figures, they are all quite wealthy. That makes the class struggle angle a bit awkward, but one can always yell racism in a crowded little theater and divide the country along the way—all while tearing down the capitalist structure that makes wealth and upward mobility possible.

Revisionist History Takes Hold

How did the United States get here to this strange moment of rising Anti-Americanism that most infects those with no living memory of the terrorist attacks? The greatest villain in today’s politics here at the 25th anniversary of 9/11 may be revisionist history. As Victoria Manning notes in a piece for Restoration News, Virginia Democrats just mandated the revival of a 9/11 video that warns teachers against “American exceptionalism” and Muslim trauma. That’s right, a quarter of a century after nineteen Muslim hijackers murdered almost 3,000 Americans in the name of Jihad, Virginia, with Gov. Abigail Spanberger (D)

leading the charge, is telling public school teachers and their students that the real victims were Muslims. Revisionist history is addictive.

Manning writes, Connecticut created a new state law in 2026 that requires the State Board of Education to make curriculum materials available to local school boards on Islamic and Arab studies. Judaism and Christianity are left out. So as not to be outdone, California got in on the act when its Palo Alto Unified School District took students on a high school trip to a mosque where the Jewish students were compelled to wear head coverings, given Qurans, and taught that Islam “promotes social justice.” Parents filed suit against the district on August 7, demonstrating that revisionist history is not going unchecked.

The Associated Press has compiled a list of the teaching approaches to 9/11 across 40 states. There’s cause for concern and encouragement on the list. But on the positive side, even deep-blue New Jersey has adopted what seems to be an even-handed standard. High school history classes look at how the debate between national security and civil liberties evolved after 9/11. The Patriot Act, anyone? The students also take stock of U.S. decisions to go to war in Afghanistan and Iraq; all fair game.

For a whole set of reasons, New Jersey, out of all 50 states, just might offer the most compelling historical window into 9/11. About 750 residents died during the attacks. Todd Beamer was one of them. He was among the passengers of United Airlines Flight 93 who stormed the cockpit, confronted hijackers, and forced the plane to crash in Stonycreek Township near Shanksville, Pennsylvania. Flight 93 was presumably on its way to either the White House or the Capitol Building.

One question that remains unanswered is how many Muslims in New Jersey, if any, were celebrating the attacks on the World Trade Center. President Donald Trump had said there were “thousands and thousands.” Media outlets have been quick to dismiss Trump’s accusations, but subsequent reports have emerged saying there were celebrations, although no hard information has ever confirmed the actual number.

The 9/11 Commission Report Comes Full Circle

Perhaps the most important and relevant Jersey connection to 9/11 is with Tom Kean, the popular two-term Republican governor from the 1980s. Kean served as chair of the 9/11 Commission Report that determined the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) and the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) failed to share information with each other. The report found that the lack of interagency coordination and cooperation made it more difficult for investigators to connect the dots leading to 9/11. Gov. Mikie Sherrill (D) of New Jersey ought to go back and revisit her predecessor’s report. She’s a leading critic of the 287(g) program that enables federal officials to partner with state officials for the purpose of enforcing federal immigration law.

As Restoration News has previously reported, the Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) agency has become an essential component of U.S. national security strategy. ICE recently partnered with the FBI and U.S. Customs and Border Protection in an operation that resulted in the detention, arrest, and deportation of a Cuban spy in Miami. This is a kind of cooperative effort Sherrill has opposed to the detriment of legal Jersey residents. But reality is catching up.

After fleeing ICE agents in a vehicle on September 2, an illegal alien crashed into another vehicle on a busy highway in New Jersey and injured the wife of Democrat East Brunswick Mayor Brad Cohen. There’s room to argue that an active 287(g) program could have made ICE’s job much easier while preempting dangerous encounters. That’s certainly the case in red areas of the country where 287(g) is prevalent.

Turning back now to that dive bar conversation that unfolded in the earliest days of the 21st Century, it’s clear that the 1990s were a great time to be alive. The “End of History” was a phrase that caught on. Peace and prosperity, no messy foreign entanglements, no serious strategic competitors, and advancements in computer technology. But “Holiday from History” might be a more apt description of that era. Look close enough, and it is clear international terrorism was gaining a foothold. There was the 1993 World Trade Center, where Islamists tried but failed to collapse the buildings. So, the country just went back to sleep. That part about the necessity of the elected president winning the popular vote still reverberates. My argument then and now is that it’s the Electoral College that counts, but certainly candidates should try to win the popular vote.

Bush did in fact win the popular vote when he was re-elected in 2004. But he would be the last Republican candidate to do so until Trump was re-elected in 2024. One reason Trump won handily is because of public concern over crime, broadly speaking, and the indisputable nexus between illegal immigration and crime. If blue state governors like Sherrill get their way and sanctuary policies prevail over 287(g), we could be looking at a domestic terror attack that makes 9/11 look small in comparison. The 1990s seem so far away.

Access the article: <https://restoration-news.com/remembering-9-11-and-the-unreal-moments-of-the-1990s>

September 11 Documentary On MLB Network Tells Story Of 'When America Took The Field.' Watch It Now

By James Schapiro originally published and premiered on MLB (September 11 2026)

NEW YORK -- On Sept. 11, 2001, Chief Terri Tobin of the New York Police Department spent over an hour evacuating survivors from Ground Zero before the South Tower fell. The injuries she sustained in the collapse put her in the hospital.

Watch It Now (1hr 30mins): <https://www.mlb.com/video/when-america-took-the-field-x0774>

Ten days later, Tobin, a Mets fan born and raised in Queens, watched from her hospital bed as the Mets finally returned to the field at Shea Stadium. She was still watching a few hours later, when Mike Piazza hit the home run that helped heal a city.



Twenty-five years later, at Citi Field on Thursday night, Tobin met Piazza for the first time.

"We have those memories seared into our brains," Tobin said, seated alongside Piazza and other members of the 2001 Mets. "But I will say, the glimmer of hope really came when Mike hit that home run."

As baseball returned in the aftermath of the attacks, Piazza's home run may have provided its signature moment. And it's just one of many storylines that unfolds in "When America Took the Field," a new documentary produced by MLB Network that premiered at Citi Field and on MLB Network on Thursday night.

The film chronicles the aftermath of the Sept. 11 attacks, and how Major League Baseball stepped forward to help heal the nation. Todd Zeile, 2001 Mets first baseman, executive produced the film alongside Mark Levin and Chris Wax.

"When America Took the Field" features interviews with figures from across the baseball landscape. There are players including Ken Griffey Jr., Bernie Williams, Chipper Jones, Roger Clemens, Craig Biggio and others; managers Bobby Valentine and Joe Torre; former MLB Commissioner Bud Selig; and broadcasters Bob Costas, Joe Buck and Tom Verducci. The film also features extensive excerpts from a conversation between Zeile, Piazza, Al Leiter and John Franco.

David Wright, who attended the premiere, was only 18 on Sept. 11, and had just finished his first Minor League season; he wasn't a New Yorker yet. But after the attacks, something changed.

"Putting that Minor League jersey on from then on, it felt different," he said. "Even though I had very little experience in New York, putting New York across my chest just meant more."

"When America Took the Field" tells the baseball stories – notably, Piazza's home run and the Yankees' run to the World Series, including a memorable interview with Ray Sturtz, the Secret Service agent who, during the World Series, went undercover as an umpire. But it also follows ordinary people who suffered unimaginable losses on Sept. 11, and who looked to baseball for help.

There's the Marino family, for instance. Kenny Marino was a member of Rescue 1, a specialized unit of the New York Fire Department, and he was one of the 343 firefighters who never made it home on Sept. 11. In the aftermath, Kenny's wife Katrina sought solace from an unexpected source: Kenny's favorite player, Ken Griffey Jr.

Then there's Brielle Saracini, whose father Victor was the captain of United Airlines Flight 175, which struck the South Tower. In the days after her father's death, Brielle wrote a letter to her favorite player, Derek Jeter. The documentary features a photo taken two weeks later, of joy flooding Brielle's face when she realized that Jeter had responded.

On the Mets' side, there's the Quackenbush family. Chris Quackenbush worked on the 104th floor of the South Tower, and had gone into the office early on Sept. 11. He was a Mets fanatic. Ten days after the attacks, his son C.J. was in the stands when the Mets returned to Shea and Piazza went deep.

"Part of what we wanted to do in this film is beyond just the baseball stories, we wanted to find some family stories that we could tell," said director Andrew Brenner. "We really wanted to tell the story that baseball played in helping people heal a little bit."

Every year on Sept. 11, Zeile attends a ceremony held at one of New York City's 200-plus firehouses. He wants to remember the 343 firefighters who lost their lives — and he wants to make sure everyone else remembers them too.

"That is the simple mission that we have," he said. "To make sure that nobody ever forgets."

Access the article: https://www.mlb.com/news/sept-11-documentary-when-america-took-the-field-premieres-in-new-york?adobe_mc=TS%3D1789149612%7CMCMID%3D09477791974209814246827173326747448106%7CMCORGID%3DA65F776A5245B01B0A490D44@AdobeOrg&affiliateId=mlbapp-ios_webview_news-index&rsid=mlbios.at.bat.new.implementation

Real America's Music To Release "We Miss You, Charlie"

News originally provided by Real America's Music (September 2, 2026)

September 4 release marks a tribute project honoring the legacy of Charlie Kirk.

WEST PALM BEACH, Fla., Sept. 2, 2026 /PRNewswire/ -- Real America's Music is announcing the release of a tribute single by acclaimed artists Natasha Owens and Benjy Gaither titled, "We Miss You, Charlie" on September 4, 2026.

As the one-year anniversary of Charlie Kirk's death approaches on September 10, Real America's Music is honoring his memory in a way that goes far beyond a song. "We Miss You, Charlie," will serve as a tribute project built to turn remembrance into action.

One hundred percent of the net profits from the project will be donated to TPUSA and TP Action, supporting the cultural and political causes Charlie cared about most: the next generation of student leaders, and grassroots organizing leading into the heat of the midterm elections.

"One year later, we still feel the weight of Charlie's absence — but we also feel the power of everything he built," said Parker Sigg, Vice President at Real America's Voice, the streaming platform for The Charlie Kirk Show. 'We Miss You, Charlie' is our way of saying that his mission didn't end with him — it's being carried forward, louder than ever, by the millions of people he inspired."

Access the full article: <https://www.prnewswire.com/news-releases/real-americas-music-to-release-we-miss-you-charlie-302867063.htm><https://www.prnewswire.com/news-releases/real-americas-music-to-release-we-miss-you-charlie-302867063.html>

Natasha Owens - We Miss You, Charlie (Feat. Benjy Gaither) (Official Music Video)

Watch the beautiful music video tribute (4mins 5secs): <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7zVJcg7FlxE>

DOWNLOAD THE SONG HERE! <https://too.fm/america250> (In partnership with Real America's Voice, proceeds from the single will benefit Turning Point USA.)



Public Corner

Public Local Meetings

Interested in attending public meetings? Here are a few in your area for this month.
<https://www.mercercounty.org/i-want-to/calendar-meeting-list>

HVRSD School Board Meeting

Monday October 5, 2026 Special Meeting at 5:30 PM
Monday October 12, 2026 at 6:30 PM Regular Meeting
425 S Main St. Pennington, NJ 08534 or Livestream on YouTube

Municipal Township Meetings

<https://www.hopewelltpw.org/calendar.aspx?CID=32>

Township Committee Regular Meetings
Monday October 5, 2026, 6:30 PM
Monday October 19, 2026, 6:30 PM

Meetings are in hybrid format- Township Municipal Building & Zoom

Township meetings will be held at HOPEWELL TOWNSHIP MUNICIPAL SERVICES BUILDING 201 Washington Crossing - Pennington Road, Titusville, NJ 08560

In case you are unable to attend Township Committee mtgs, the recordings are available. Per the township clerk's office Kathy, they are "usually," available within a few days of the meeting.

Happy viewing click here: https://videoplayer.telvue.com/player/k83q0qZsxB_6dlk4EjvYfv...

Or: <https://www.hopewelltwp.org/> select How Do I.../ bottom right View/ Video Library

Board of Elections Meeting

Schedule, Agenda, Minutes: <https://www.mercercounty.org/boards-commissions/board-of-elections/board-meeting-schedule-election-timelines>

Tuesday October 13, 2026 at 12:00 PM

Board of Elections Meetings will be at 930 Spruce St., Lawrence, NJ 08648

Mercer County Board of County Commissioners

Meeting Notice, Agenda: <https://www.mercercounty.org/government/board-of-county-commissioners/meeting-agenda>

Meeting Schedule -- October 2026

Tuesday October 6, 2026 6:00 PM Agenda Meeting

Tuesday October 20, 2026 6:00 PM Agenda Meeting

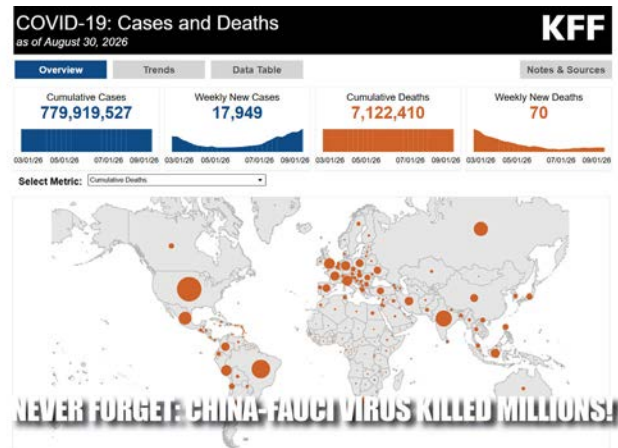
Thursday October 8, 2026 6:00 PM Formal Meeting

Thursday October 22, 2026 6:00 PM Formal Meeting

Agenda and Formal Meetings will take place at the Mercer County Administration Building, Room 211, 640 South Broad St., Trenton, NJ unless otherwise stated.

In order to encourage full participation of these meetings, please submit any requests for accommodations of people with disabilities to the Clerk to the Board, Mercer County Administration Building, PO Box 8068, Trenton, New Jersey, 08650 (609) 989-6583 {V/TTY} {Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 101-336}

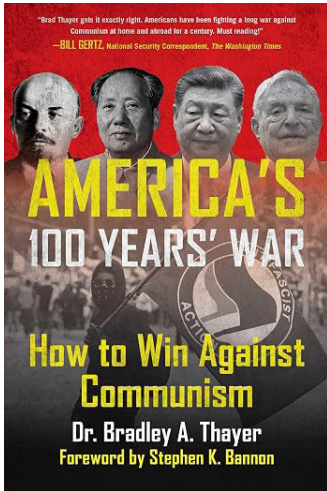
TruthBTold



Source: <https://www.kff.org/covid-19/global-covid-19-tracker/>

The Islamization of Scouting is no longer confined to Muslim-only troops. Across American and British Scouting, Islam is now appearing in national events, children's activities, badges, recruitment plans, family programming and permanent infrastructure. At the same time, Saudi Arabia has placed an effective \$87 million behind World Scouting's flagship Messengers of Peace program—including a Saudi-supported operation inside America's National Jamboree. Source: <https://nataliegwinters.substack.com/p/mosques-wudu-lessons-and-90-million>

At the Movies, Bookstores



Book: America's 100 Years' War: How To Win Against Communism

Author: Dr. Bradley A. Thayer Ph.D

Forward by: Stephen K. Bannon

Publisher: War Room Books

Publication Date: August 18 2026

Hardcover, 312 Pages

Overview

The Cold War never ended—because Communism was never defeated.

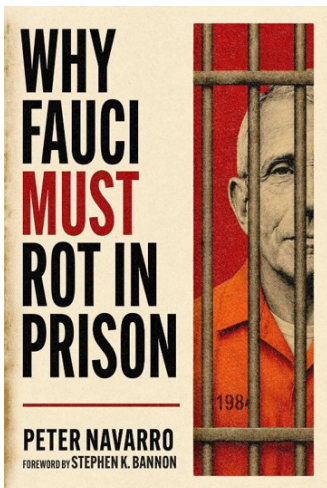
For more than a century, the United States has been locked in an ideological war most Americans do not perceive. In America's Hundred Years' War, Dr. Bradley A. Thayer argues that the struggle against Communism did not end with the fall of the Soviet Union—it evolved, spread, and embedded itself within American politics, institutions, and culture, and Western civilization.

Tracing the roots of modern political upheaval back to the Bolshevik Revolution of 1917, Thayer contends that Leninism shaped not only the Soviet Union and Communist China, but also the ideological movements now transforming America from within. From the Comintern to the Chinese Communist Party, from Mao and Xi Jinping to George Soros and the progressivism of the modern Democratic Party, Thayer presents a sweeping reinterpretation of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries as one continuous ideological conflict against Communism.

Blending Cold War history, geopolitical analysis, political theory, and cultural critique, America's Hundred Years' War examines the rise of Communist ideology abroad, its penetration into American institutions at home, and the growing battle over American identity, free speech, education, technology, and Western civilization itself. Thayer argues that the key to victory over Communism is a rebirth of American identity: the American spirit, political liberalism, and Western civilization.

Provocative, expansive, and unapologetically ideological, this book offers a stark warning about the future of America and a roadmap for those who believe the fight for the American experiment is far from over.

To purchase: Amazon, Barnes & Noble, Books-a-Million



Book: Why Fauci MUST Rot In Prison

Author: Peter Navarro

Foreword By: Stephen K. Bannon

Publisher: War Room Books

Publication Date: October 13, 2026

Hardcover, 336 Pages

Description

This Is the Trial Anthony Fauci Never Faced

In Why Fauci MUST Rot in Prison, Peter Navarro prosecutes the man he calls the Godfather of the Pandemic—arguing that Fauci's institute funded dangerous gain-of-function coronavirus research in Wuhan, failed to police the work, and then helped bury the lab-leak story to save his reputation and institution.

And that is only the first count.

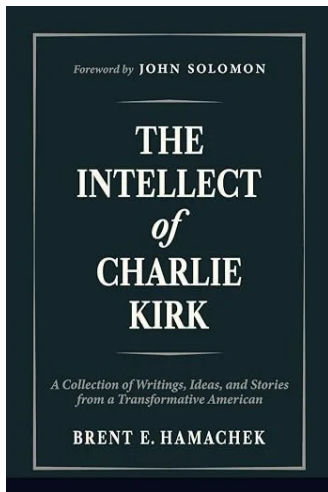
Lockdowns. School closures. Mandatory masks. Hydroxychloroquine hysteria. Forced vaccination. Universal boosters. Myocarditis. Natural immunity ignored. Pregnancy uncertainties. Navarro follows the trail into the vaccine wing of the Fauci Medical-Industrial Complex, where government power, scientific authority, media influence, and Big Pharma reinforced one another.

Navarro was the White House adviser who repeatedly challenged Fauci when few others would. Now he has Fauci's private diaries. The defendant kept the evidence. Was the result merely catastrophic error—or involuntary manslaughter, even homicide?

The trial of the century begins here.

The book is available on Amazon, Barnes & Noble, Bookshop, and anywhere else you find books.

Author website: <https://peternavarro.com/>



Book: The Intellect Of Charlie Kirk: A Collection Of Writings, Ideas, And Stories From A Transformative American

Author: Brent E. Hamachek

Foreword By: John Solomon

Publisher: Just the Books

Publication Date: September 3, 2026

Paperback, 288 Pages

Description

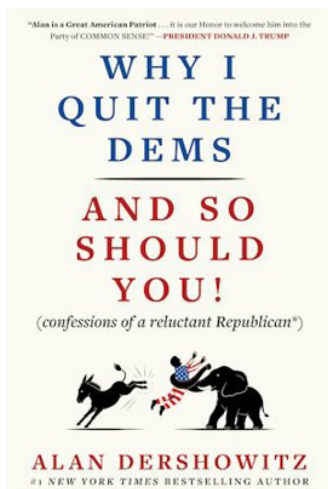
From the two who gave you the New York Times bestseller *Time for a Turning Point* comes this collection of their work. It includes a never-before-seen introduction by Charlie Kirk and a Foreword by John Solomon.

Brent Hamachek met Charlie Kirk at a dinner table in the fall of 2013, when Kirk was a nineteen-year-old with a business card and a fledgling group called Turning Point USA. Thirty-one years his senior, Hamachek had no idea what he could offer the young activist; he only knew he had never met anyone like him. What followed was more than a decade of collaboration that helped shape one of the most consequential movements in modern American politics.

The Intellect of Charlie Kirk is Hamachek's firsthand account of that partnership: the speeches, opinion columns, and radio monologues they built together; the persuasive techniques and Socratic method Kirk turned into a signature weapon; his gradual embrace of Donald Trump; the fight over Brett Kavanaugh's confirmation; the early warnings about Covid-19; and the private apology that repaired a year-long separation between the two men. Told through personal stories interwoven with the actual content they created, this collection reveals the intellectual engine behind Kirk's rise—and the friendship that powered it.

Written in the year following Charlie Kirk's assassination, this is not a hagiography or a eulogy. It is, in Hamachek's own words, "just facts, told through stories," from the man who had a front-row seat to watch Charlie Kirk's mind—and a movement—come alive. The book is available on: Amazon, Barnes & Noble, Bookshop

More about the book: <https://www.justthenetwork.com/just-the-books> ; <https://justthenews.com/accountability/media/just-news-parent-publishing-its-first-book-tribute-charlie-kirks-intellect>



Why I Quit the Dems - And So Should You! (confessions of a reluctant Republican*)

Author: Alan Dershowitz

Publisher: Skyhorse Publishing

Publication Date: September 29, 2026

Hardcover, 176 Pages

Description

How Radical Democrats Drove Dershowitz to Become a Reluctant Republican

For nearly seventy years, Alan Dershowitz remained a loyal Democrat—until, in his view, the party abandoned its centrist foundations and embraced radical hostility toward Israel. Reluctantly, he aligned himself with the Republican Party despite continuing disagreements with parts of its domestic agenda. In an era marked by deepening division and ideological extremism, his overriding concern became preventing the rise of politicians and movements he believes threaten democratic institutions and civic stability.

He observed for years what he saw as a growing shift toward left-wing extremism, particularly on university campuses, and sought to challenge it from within the Democratic Party as a loyal dissenter. But after October 7, 2023, Dershowitz concluded that the transformation of the party had become irreversible—especially regarding Israel and its supporters. Remaining

affiliated with a movement he believes now tolerates or promotes ideological extremism, he argues, would betray principles he has upheld throughout his life.

Yet his political break is neither simple nor absolute. Alan continues to support many traditionally liberal positions, including reproductive choice, gay rights, environmental protection, racial equality, and expanded access to health care, while opposing policies he views as anti-meritocratic, such as race-based affirmative action and DEI initiatives. Had the Democratic Party not, in his opinion, dramatically shifted against Israel, he believes he might well have remained what he calls a “Fetterman Democrat.” Instead, he describes the party’s increasingly strident anti-Israel stance—even among self-described centrists—as the final rupture that compelled his political realignment.

The book is available on: Amazon, Barnes & Noble, Bookshop

More about the book: <https://www.skyhorsepublishing.com/9781510789364/why-i-quit-the-dems/>

Hillsdale College: The Story Of America

Episode 17: Benjamin Franklin

By Hillsdale College. Hillsdale College President Larry Arnn introduces a new video series, “The Story of America,” created in partnership with the White House.

Stories that shaped a nation. Faced with a choice between freedom and tyranny, courageous men and women risked their lives, their fortunes, and their sacred honor to form a more perfect union—the United States of America. As our nation marks its 250th anniversary, we invite you to watch and learn from these fascinating stories that celebrate the American spirit.



Episode 17 (May 12 2026, 14mins 46secs): Join Kevin Slack, Associate Professor of Politics at Hillsdale College as we explore the story of the eminent founding father who encouraged his fellow founders to always seek and acknowledge the help of the Divine.

Access the video (14mins 46secs): <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ho4Ym6rzfoo&t=6s>

Watch the series: https://storyofamerica.hillsdale.edu/#watch_series

Support Hillsdale College: <https://secured.hillsdale.edu/hillsdale/support-hillsdale-college...>

Visit our website: <http://hillsdale.edu>

Learn from our online courses: <http://online.hillsdale.edu>

Read Imprimis: <https://imprimis.hillsdale.edu/>

Hillsdale College is an independent institution of higher learning founded in 1844 by men and women “grateful to God for the inestimable blessings” resulting from civil and religious liberty and “believing that the diffusion of learning is essential to the perpetuity of these blessings.” It pursues the stated object of the founders: “to furnish all persons who wish, irrespective of nation, color, or sex, a literary, scientific, [and] theological education” outstanding among American colleges “and to combine with this such moral and social instruction as will best develop the minds and improve the hearts of its pupils.” As a nonsectarian Christian institution, Hillsdale College maintains “by precept and example” the immemorial teachings and practices of the Christian faith.

The College also considers itself a trustee of our Western philosophical and theological inheritance tracing to Athens and Jerusalem, a heritage finding its clearest expression in the American experiment of self-government under law.

By training the young in the liberal arts, Hillsdale College prepares students to become leaders worthy of that legacy. By encouraging the scholarship of its faculty, it contributes to the preservation of that legacy for future generations. By publicly defending that legacy, it enlists the aid of other friends of free civilization and thus secures the conditions of its own survival and independence.

250 Years Ago: September-October 1776

Battle of Kip's Bay: September 15 1776

Although George Washington made initial plans to hold New York after the retreat from Long Island, a council of war held on September 12th resulted in the decision to abandon the city. British General Howe seized the opportunity and attacked the Continental Army before the withdrawal could be completed.

Washington tried to rally militiamen fleeing from the onslaught of Howe's 9,000 troops, but retreated to Harlem Heights after being unable to stop the British advance.

Learn more about the battle: <https://www.mountvernon.org/library/digitalhistory/digital-encyclopedia/article/battle-of-kip-s-bay>

Battle of Harlem Heights: September 16 1776

Having abandoned New York, George Washington joined his troops along a new defensive line at Harlem Heights on September 16, 1776. Soon after he arrived, this position was tested by an advanced detachment of Howe's forces.

Although the Continentals were initially pushed back, reinforcements and a flank attack ordered by Washington resulted in a British retreat and Washington's first battlefield victory of the American Revolution.

Learn more about the battle: <https://www.mountvernon.org/library/digitalhistory/digital-encyclopedia/article/battle-of-harlem-heights>

British Execute Nathan Hale: September 22 1776



Nathan Hale's last words are among the most famous in American history. As he stood before the British gallows on September 22, 1776 (250 years ago), he is reported to have said:

"I only regret that I have but one life to lose for my country."

That single sentence, delivered with composure and conviction, instantly immortalized him. It wasn't just a farewell—it was a declaration of undying patriotism.

Nathan Hale was just 21 years old when he was executed. Let that sink in—barely into adulthood, he volunteered for a mission that most seasoned soldiers wouldn't dare accept. He didn't have to. No one forced him. He did it because he believed America deserved to be free.

Learn more at: <https://historytimemachine.com/the-real-story-of-nathan-hale-in-the-american-revolution/>

Photos courtesy of <https://www.cia.gov/>. Nathan Hale was the first American executed for spying for his country.

Battle of White Plains: October 28 1776

With the British army maneuvering to make his Harlem Heights position untenable, George Washington withdrew from the island of Manhattan, and established a new encampment further north near White Plains, New York.

On October 28, 1776, a flank attack by the British on this new position resulted in the collapse of Washington's line. Thankfully, he was able to orchestrate an orderly withdrawal that preserved the army. Unfortunately, Washington's retreat further exposed Fort Mifflin, which remained garrisoned on Manhattan.

Learn more about the battle: <https://www.mountvernon.org/library/digitalhistory/digital-encyclopedia/article/battle-of-white-plains>

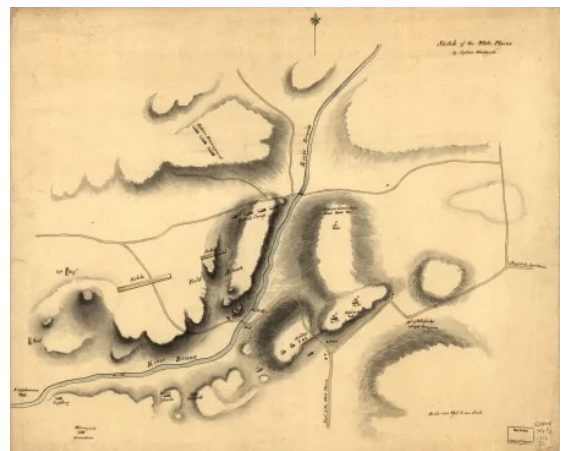
More information about the Revolutionary War battles: <https://www.mountvernon.org/george-washington/the-revolutionary-war/washingtons-revolutionary-war-battles>



The British landing at Kip's Bay, New York Island, Sept. 15, 1776," 1777, by Robert Cleveley. Royal Museums Greenwich. Public Domain



Battle of Harlem, J.R. Armytage, after Chappel [MVLA; WB-24B1]



Sketch of White Plains, by Charles Blaskowitz, c. 1776. Courtesy, Library of Congress [G3804.W7S3 1776 .B5]

We the People of Interest

Our New Jersey Signers Of The Declaration Of Independence

Publishers note: In July 2026, our 250th Semiquincentennial, we wanted to encourage getting to know our esteemed New Jersey Signers of the Declaration of Independence. From November 2025 through March 2026 we featured our five heroic NJ Signers. They truly did pledge their Lives, their Fortunes and their Sacred Honor. They all deserve our utmost gratitude and we should all take the time to learn, remember and pass on the stories and legacy of these unsung heroes of American history.

- **Abraham Clark** (featured in January 2026: <https://mercervethepeople.com/wp-content/uploads/2026/04/0126-MercerWe-revised.pdf>)
- **John Hart** (featured in November 2025: <https://mercervethepeople.com/wp-content/uploads/2026/04/1125-MercerWe.pdf>)
- **Francis Hopkinson** (featured in February 2026: <https://mercervethepeople.com/wp-content/uploads/2026/03/0226-MercerWe-revised.pdf>)
- **Richard Stockton** (featured in March 2026: <https://mercervethepeople.com/wp-content/uploads/2026/04/0326-MercerWe.pdf>)
- **John Witherspoon** (featured in December 2025): <https://mercervethepeople.com/wp-content/uploads/2026/04/1225-MercerWe.pdf>)

Freedom 250: Signers Of The Declaration Of Independence

Celebrating the Triumph of the American Spirit

On July 4, 2026, America will celebrate the most important milestone in our country's history—250 years of American Independence. "With a single sheet of parchment and 56 signatures, America began the greatest political journey in human history," said President Trump of this momentous anniversary.

Under the President's leadership, the Salute to America 250 Task Force ("Task Force 250") is executing a full year of festivities, which began on Memorial Day, 2025, and will continue through the end of 2026.

The White House is engaging all levels of government, the private sector, non-profit and educational institutions, and every citizen across the country to celebrate this historic milestone. To achieve this ambitious vision, we have created a new public-private partnership called Freedom 250.

Task Force 250 aims to inspire a renewed love for American history, encourage citizens to experience the beauty of our country, ignite a spirit of adventure and innovation to help our nation succeed for the next 250 years, and invite Americans to pray for our country and our people and rededicate ourselves as One Nation Under God.

From the Freedom 250 website watch a brief video and read a brief bio on each of the Declaration of Independence Signers: <https://www.whitehouse.gov/freedom250/founders-museum/signers/profiles/>



Painting: The Declaration of Independence, July 4, 1776. Artist: John Trumbull, 1817-1818. Location: Capitol Rotunda.

Happy September 4th & Labor Day Weekend!!

The Graf Dairy Hero Foundation's Post

By Werner Graf originally published in The Graf Dairy Hero Foundation (September 4 2026)

Why is September 4th important? Every Sept. 4, the people of Somers Point, New Jersey hold a ceremony to remember hero Richard Somers and the crew of the USS "Intrepid". Never heard of him? You're not alone. Many real life superheroes in history get very little coverage in our schools these days.

During the night of Sept. 4, 1804, a small merchant ship sailed stealthily into Tripoli harbor in North Africa under 26 yr-old Captain Richard Somers and a skeleton crew of 12 volunteers. There was no cargo. It was instead loaded with bombs and explosives. Somers and his crew knew they had little chance of coming back alive.

For three years, the United States had been at war with fanatic islamics in the Mediterranean called “Barbary Pirates.” However, in actuality, these sea fighters weren’t “pirates” they were commissioned corsairs by islamic nations waging war on western countries.

Their war had started long before the United States existed. It began in 708 when Arabs conquered the Roman cities of Tangier, Algiers, Tunis and Tripoli in North Africa which became known as the “Barbary Kingdoms”. They later became allies of the Ottoman Turks who were also at war with Christian Europe.

For 1,000 years, the Barbary kingdoms hired raiders to attack European ships and coastal towns as far away as Iceland. They captured more than 1 million Europeans and sold them as slaves in North Africa complementing their African slave trade which castrated and brutalized millions more men.

In 1560, Pope Pius V formed a “Holy League” of many nations to fight back but by the 1700s, most European nations, even the British Empire, stopped fighting. They decided it was cheaper to pay “tribute” to the Barbary kingdoms then to deal with their savagery.

Upon independence in 1783, the United States also paid tribute to protect our people and keep peace in the absence of any naval power (our last revolutionary war ship was sold in 1785). However, the more we paid, the more the Muslims demanded. They knew we had no choice.

Over time American resolve hardened against tribute. In 1793, the US discontinued payment of French loans from the American Revolution in the wake of 1789’s violent French revolution and execution of Louis XVI. That along with the Jay Treaty bringing us closer to England in 1794 resulted in France calling it open season on American ships and any vessel in American waters. France commandeered over 300 American ships that year in the Caribbean alone and, without a navy, President Washington was powerless to stop it.

In 1797, the French demanded tribute in the XYZ Affair but newly elected John Adams, and the Americans had had enough. In 1798 Congress recommissioned the Navy and approved military action against France without formally declaring war (called the “Quasi War”). The rallying cry “Millions for defense, not one cent for tribute” —to France, the Barbary Kingdoms, or anyone else— echoed throughout the country. We were done paying ransom. After hundreds of deaths on each side, France & the United States ended hostilities in 1800.

But the Muslims continued raiding American ships in the Mediterranean and enslaving sea men. Richard Somers had been one of the first to join this new Navy and in 1801, newly elected president Thomas Jefferson finally sent our freshly minted marines to North Africa to fight the Barbary Kingdoms.

During the first two years, the American fleet was led by naïve and cautious commanders, repeatedly outwitted by a deceptive enemy. That quickly changed when Edward Preble was made commodore in December of 1803. During the next 10 months, the Americans aggressively hunted, attacked and captured Barbary ships and blockaded their ports. All but one of the islamic kingdoms quickly made peace with America.

However Tripoli did not. Its warships retreated to the safety of its harbor believing that Americans would soon get tired of an expensive foreign war 5,000 miles away. Richard Somers and most of his fellow Intrepid shipmates understood that risk also and decided on a gamble to win the war decisively and in dramatic fashion.

Somers & his 12 volunteers packed a captured Arab ship with explosives, sailed it into Tripoli harbor pretending to be a friendly vessel, hoping to devastate the enemy fleet anchored there. Tragically, the ship exploded prematurely —all were killed instantly.

Like the Alamo 30 years after, their sacrifice inspired the rest of the fleet to continue the fight. In 1804 Stephen Decatur led a stealth mission to burn the captured frigate USS Philadelphia in Tripoli Harbor, a feat British Admiral Lord Nelson called “the most bold and daring act of the age”. William Eaton then lead American Marines on a grueling desert March that brought them to the “shores of Tripoli” capturing several towns.

The Barbary pirates, surprised and cowed by our fierce Navy & Marines , began to fear battling Americans as it was like “fighting devils”. These real life American heroes secured respect and a peace which stopped the enslavement of American sailors and eliminated tribute from that point on.

Special thanks to our friend @SethGrossman for the core content of this post.

Access the post: https://www.facebook.com/story.php?story_fbid=122265567902251942&id=61557558280239&mibextid=wwXlfr&rdid=tPwMYs6a9lDdOp8m

Editor’s Note: Master Commandant Richard Somers Jr. USN was born September 15 1778 in Somers Point, Atlantic County NJ. <https://www.geni.com/people/Master-Commandant-Richard-Somers-Jr-USN/6000000057423800101>

Columbus Fountain Springs To Life By Union Station

By Matt Delaney originally published in *The Washington Times* (May 28 2026)

What to know:

- Water flowed again from D.C.'s Christopher Columbus Memorial Fountain after two decades.
- Interior Secretary Doug Burgum and Transportation Secretary Sean Duffy inaugurated the restored fountain.
- Built in 1912, the fountain commemorates Columbus' 1492 voyage to the Americas.

Water flowed again Thursday from D.C.'s Christopher Columbus Memorial Fountain, ending a two-decade drought for the historic structure that sits outside Union Station.

Interior Secretary Doug Burgum and Transportation Secretary Sean Duffy cut the ribbon on the now-functioning fountain as one of the White House's restoration projects around the District in the lead-up to the nation's 250th anniversary celebration this summer.

"This fountain sat broken for nearly two decades, and this grand symbol, this grand entrance to the Capitol was a symbol of neglect versus one of inspiration," Mr. Burgum said at the ceremony.

"President Trump understands something important, which is great countries build great things," he added. "But a choice was made about restoration over deterioration, and a choice was made about beauty over blight."

The monument, first built in 1912, commemorates Columbus' voyage to the Americas in 1492.

The 15-foot-tall fountain stopped working in 2007 and had run dry ever since. Officials said the memorial will reopen to the public Friday after fencing is taken down.

The Trump administration has prioritized refurbishing fountains around the District as part of beautification efforts in the city.

Mr. Burgum said 23 of the 28 fountains in the nation's capital, such as one in Lafayette Square by the White House and another in Freedom Plaza near the John A. Wilson Building, will also be restored.

Federal renovators recently brought Meridian Hill Park's large, cascading fountain back to life after it had lain dormant since 2019.

Mr. Duffy further announced that \$465 million in taxpayer money will go toward making structural repairs to Union Station and upgrading the customer experience at the train hub.

Access the article: <https://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2026/may/28/columbus-fountain-springs-life-union-station/>

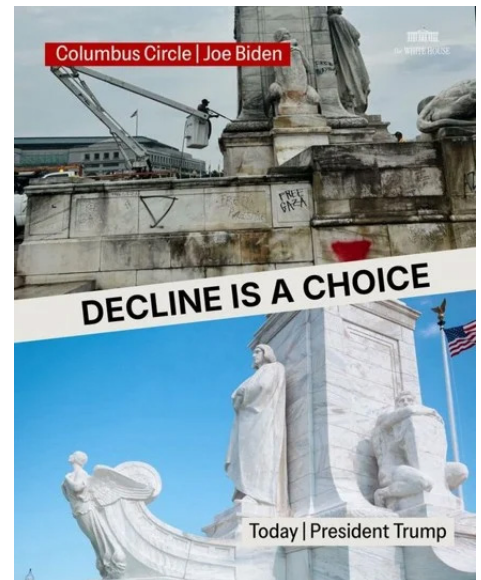
Image courtesy of @TheWhiteHouse, accessed via X.

Editor's Note: Happy Columbus Day October 12 2026!



When you are in Washington DC and near Union Station, take a moment to admire the beauty and grandeur of the newly restored Christopher Columbus Memorial Fountain. <https://www.nps.gov/places/000/columbus-fountain.htm>

Images courtesy of @SecretaryBurgum, accessed via X.



Fulton Sheen And The Persistent Specter Of Communism

COMMENTARY: The abysmal failures of communism in Russia, North Korea, China, Cuba and wherever it was employed are not difficult to see.

By Donald DeMarco originally published in National Catholic Register (July 13 2021)

In the turbulence and confusion that is going on in America these days, one idea seems to be gaining ascendancy — communism. Should we exchange “We the people,” as written in the Preamble of the U.S. Constitution, for “we the masses”? Should we trade democracy for a totalitarian state? Should we extinguish God in favor of self-worship? How did things come to this point? The abysmal failures of communism in Russia, North Korea, China, Cuba and wherever it was employed are not difficult to see.

The United States is in need of a strong, clear voice that has the ring of authority. Nearly 100 years ago, Pope Pius XI told Bishop Fulton Sheen to study Marxism and communism and never to speak in public during his pontificate without exposing their fallacies. Obedient to the Pontiff, Bishop Sheen studied Marxism and did his eloquent best to lay bare its errors both in his talks and in his writings. And he did so with both clarity and passion.

For Bishop Sheen, the notion of welcoming communism as an innovative remedy for all social ills was puzzling.

“Why can’t the modern mind see there is nothing new in communism?” he asks. “It is a groan of despair, not the revolution, that starts a new age. It is the logical development of civilization which for the last 400 years has been forgetting God” (The New York Times, March 16, 1936).

After its record of failures, whatever attraction communism may have for the present world should be even more puzzling.

Stalin declared that at the end of his Five-Year-Plan of Atheism, the last church would be closed, the last priest would be executed, and one would not find a trace of religion anywhere. Belief in God would be punishable by death.

Before the Soviets seized power, there were approximately 46,000 Orthodox churches. By 1941, the number was reduced to 4,225. Ninety-seven percent of Orthodox monasteries were either closed or destroyed. Cultural elites and intellectuals were sent to the gulag or shot. This does not paint a pretty picture.

In 1938, Bishop Sheen told a rally in New York’s Carnegie Hall that Americans had been too tolerant of man’s inhumanity to man:

“We were silent before when 2,000,000 kulaks met death and 60,000 churches were closed by an atheistic government in Russia; we were silent before when 20,000 churches and chapels were desecrated, burned and pillaged and when 6,000 diocesan clergy were murdered in Spain. ... Those who cannot pull God down from heaven are driving his creatures from the face of the earth.”

If there is no God, man cannot be created in his image and likeness. Rather, as the father of modern communism, Karl Marx insisted, man is without personal significance. He is relegated to a category.

Marx states in *Das Kapital*, “I speak of individuals insofar as they are personifications of economic categories and representatives of special classes of relations and interest.” In stating that “the individual, of and by himself, has no values unless he is a member of the revolutionary mass,” Marx was likening human society to an ant colony.

As Bishop Sheen wrote in his 1964 book *The Church, Communism and Democracy*, “to the Soviets, a person is very much like a grape who continues to exist only on condition that his individual, personal value is squeezed out of him so that he exists only in the wine of the state.”

Pope St. John Paul II’s criticisms of communism were less passionate, no doubt because, as a Pole born behind the Iron Curtain of the Soviet Union, he was writing in the shadows of Marxism, which still held dangerous sway over half of Europe during the first decade of his papacy.

In *The Acting Person*, he situated the authentic human being between the extremes of sheer individualism and absorption into the masses. He viewed the human being as a person who is a dynamic unity of individual uniqueness and communal responsibility. Bishop Sheen was more theological and focused on how communism was an enemy of the Catholic Church.

“The Church knows,” he wrote in 1941’s *War and Guilt*, “after 1,900 years’ experience that any institution which suits the spirit of the age will be a widow in the next one.”

Bishop Sheen saw the Church as a balance between two competing forces, the “reactionaries” who wanted to entrench and the “liberals” who wanted ill-advised change.



Bishop Fulton Sheen at his desk in 1956 (Photo: Public domain)

The Catholic Church is “a house built on the immutable rock with an abiding proprietor, Peter, [who] has a key that admits strangers. The reactionaries want the rock without the keys, the liberals want the keys without the rock; and we who believe in Christ, who gave both to Peter, want both,” he wrote.

How important is religion, which in a more general way strikes this balance between extremes, to America? We may consider the words of Alexis de Tocqueville in his classic work, *Democracy in America*. He looked for the key to the greatness and genius of America wherever it might be, in her fields, in her schools, in her institutions of learning, in her Constitution and in her Congress. But it was not there.

“Not until I went into the churches of America,” he writes, “did I understand the greatness and genius of America. America is great because America is good. If America ever ceases to be good, America will cease to be great.”

It is a sad spectacle to witness the current burning of churches, toppling of religious statues and denigration of the clergy.

America has the potential within itself to heal its present wounds. Her tradition is not something that should be trashed, as some people would like to see happen. In fact, it contains the wisdom needed for a reformation. Bishop Sheen’s words are still relevant, not only for society, but for the Church, as well. Communism would undo America. “In God we trust” remains a vital spark.

Donald DeMarco, Ph.D., is a Senior Fellow of Human Life International. He is professor emeritus at St. Jerome’s University in Waterloo, Ontario, an adjunct professor at Holy Apostles College in Cromwell, Connecticut, and a regular columnist for St. Austin Review. His latest works, *How to Remain Sane in a World That is Going Mad*; *Poetry that Enters the Mind and Warms the Heart*; and *How to Flourish in a Fallen World* are available through Amazon.com. Some of his recent writings may be found at Human Life International’s Truth and Charity Forum. He is the 2015 Catholic Civil Rights League recipient of the prestigious Exner Award.

Access the article: <https://www.ncregister.com/commentaries/fulton-sheen-and-the-persistent-specter-of-communism>

Video: Bishop Fulton J. Sheen On Communism & America (Full Speech w/ Narration)

Editor’s Note: Please watch this timely and prescient video by Bishop Fulton J. Sheen -- remember this video is from the early 1950s.

“Communism is the scavenger of decaying civilizations.”

“We in America, we are destined under Providence to be the secondary cause for the restoration and freedom and liberties of the peoples of the world.”

Watch the video (24mins 50secs): <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sgbfUUFLZb0>

This program opens with narration on the state of Cold War anti-Communist sentiment in America, then a biography of Sheen’s broadcasting career, including his FBI file dating back to the 1930s, before presenting the complete address.

The narration also breaks down the speech’s rhetorical technique: Sheen’s use of a preacher’s cadence and moral-philosophical framing rather than political argument, treating Communism as a spiritual rather than strictly geopolitical threat.

In this program:

- Context on Cold War anti-Communist sentiment
- A biography of Sheen’s broadcasting career and public record
- Analysis of the speech’s moral-philosophical rhetorical framing
- The complete address, unedited



LIVE UPDATES: Beatification Of Fulton Sheen

Text of decree declaring Fulton Sheen 'Blessed'

By Jonah McKeown originally published in National Catholic Register (September 24 2026)

Before a crowd of tens of thousands gathered at The Dome at America's Center in St. Louis, Archbishop Fulton J. Sheen was officially declared "blessed" on Thursday following the proclamation of a decree signed by Pope Leo XIV.

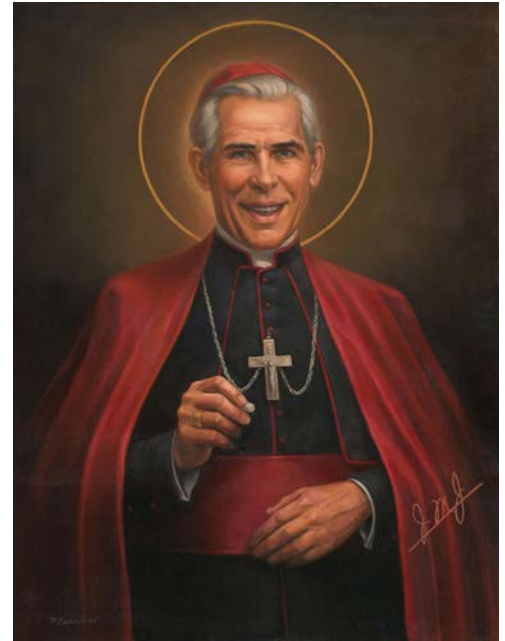
As is customary at beatifications, the decree was read first in Latin by Cardinal Luis Tagle, the Pope's representative and the pro-prefect of the Dicastery for Evangelization, and afterward in the vernacular — in this case English — by Bishop Louis Tylka of Peoria, Illinois, in whose diocese Sheen was born.

Immediately following the reading near the beginning of Mass, a portrait of Blessed Sheen was revealed showing him with a halo, to thunderous applause.

The following is an unofficial transcript of the decree read aloud during the Mass:

"We, to fulfill the desires of our brother Louis, bishop of Peoria, as well as many other brothers in the episcopate, and many of the Christian faithful, having consulted the Dicastery for the Causes of Saints by our apostolic authority, grant the faculty that the Venerable Servant of God Fulton John Sheen, titular archbishop of Neoportus and former bishop of Rochester in America, a tireless preacher of the Gospel through the modern means of communication and a diligent shepherd animated by missionary zeal, may henceforth be called blessed and may be celebrated on the ninth day of December, the day on which he was born into heaven, in the places and manner established by the law. In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen. Given at Castel Gandolfo on the 16th day of July, in memory of the Blessed Virgin Mary of Mount Carmel in the year of Our Lord 2026, the second of our pontificate. Pope Leo XIV."

Access the website: <https://www.ncregister.com/cna/fulton-sheen-live-updates>



Archbishop Fulton Sheen's Beatification Portrait on September 24 2026. Provided by courtesy of a contributor.

The Prayer That Saved The Constitution

By Robert Morgan originally published in FaithGateway

June 28, 1787

Unless the Lord builds the house, They labor in vain who build it.
— Psalm 127:1

After the British surrender, the American Colonies had a nation but needed a constitution. The old Articles of Confederation were inadequate. In May 1787, delegates gathered in Philadelphia for a convention to draft a constitution that would establish an effective federal government. They appointed George Washington as chair, but that's about all they agreed on. From the beginning, the delegates quarreled over deeply held disagreements as to the extent and form of the new government.

That's when venerable Benjamin Franklin, eighty-one, rose to make a motion:

"In this situation of this assembly, groping, as it were, in the dark to find political truth, and scarce able to distinguish it when presented to us, how has it happened, sir, that we have not hitherto once thought of humbly applying to the Father of Lights to illuminate our understandings? In the beginning of the contest with Britain, when we were sensible of danger, we had daily prayers in this room for the divine protection. Our prayers, sir, were heard — and they were graciously answered. All of us, who were engaged in the struggle, must have observed frequent instances of a superintending Providence in our favor. To that kind Providence we owe this happy opportunity of consulting in peace on the means of establishing our future national felicity. And have we now forgotten that powerful friend?... I have lived, sir, a long time; and the longer I live, the more convincing proofs I see of this truth, **that God governs in the affairs of men!** And if a sparrow cannot fall to the ground without His notice, is it probable that an empire can rise without His aid? We have been assured, sir, in the sacred writings, that "except the Lord build the house, they labor in vain that build it."¹



Benjamin Franklin by Joseph Siffred Duplessis, 1778. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, The Friedsam Collection, Bequest of Michael Friedsam, 1931.

Ben Franklin was quoting here from Psalm 127. His entire remarkable speech, short as it was, was filled with biblical quotations and allusions, but this psalm was at the heart of what he wanted to say. Unless the Lord is in any enterprise, it has a limited future. Even building a house without His aid is perilous. Raising a family or a home without His strength is hazardous. Guarding a city without His blessings is futile. Working hard to gain wealth without putting Him first is vain.

How much more the establishing of a new nation, one unlike any ever seen on the earth. Surely such an undertaking requires the help of almighty God.

Franklin continued:

"I firmly believe this; and I also believe, that without his concurring aid, we shall succeed in this political building no better than the builders of Babel: we shall be divided by our little partial local interests, our projects will be confounded, and we ourselves shall become a reproach... I therefore beg leave to move, that henceforth prayers, imploring the assistance of heaven, and its blessings on our deliberations, be held in this assembly every morning before we proceed to business; and that one or more of the clergy of the city be requested to officiate in that service."²

Even this motion failed because, perhaps, the convention had no money to hire a chaplain. But a few days later, on July 4, 1787, General Washington led the delegates to a prayer service at Philadelphia's Reformed Calvinist Lutheran Church, where Rev. William Rogers offered these words:

*"As this is a period, O Lord, big with events, impenetrable by any human scrutiny, we fervently recommend to Thy Fatherly notice that august Body, assembled in this city, who compose our Federal Convention; will it please Thee, O Thou Eternal I AM, to favor them from day to day with Thy immediate presence; be Thou their wisdom and their strength! Enable them to devise such measures as may prove happily instrumental for healing all divisions and promoting the good of the great whole... that the United States of America may furnish the world with one example of a free and permanent government, which shall be the result of human and mutual deliberation, and which shall not, like all other governments, whether ancient or modern, spring out of mere chance or be established by force... We close this, our solemn address, by saying, as our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ hath taught us — Our Father, who art in Heaven ..."*³

The delegates joined in the Lord's Prayer, then went back to work. Soon they had a document that began: "We the People of the United States, in Order to form a more perfect Union."

James Madison, writing about the event later, said, "It is impossible for the man of pious reflection not to perceive in it a finger of that Almighty Hand, which has been so frequently and signally extended to our relief in the critical states of the revolution."⁴

1. Quotes in Timothy Pitkin, A Political and Civil History of the United States of America, vol.

2 (New Haven, CT: Hezekiah Howe and Durrie & Peck, 1828), 246. 2. Quotes in Timothy Pitkin, A Political and Civil History, 246.

3. The American Museum, or Repository of Ancient and Modern Fugitive Pieces, Prose and Poetry, for January 1788, vol. 3, no. 1 (Philadelphia: Mathew Carey, 1788), 17–18.

4. The Federalist on the New Constitution, no. 37 (Hallowell, ME: Masters, Smith & Company, 1857), 166.

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PO Box 142, Titusville, NJ 08560

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