

## ARTICLE SIGNED "CANDIDUS." For Modern Times

### Modern Commentary at the end of Original

**Sadly** Modern Americans have no real understanding of "Liberty"! It is not taught in your schools or churches. The study of the "ancients" no longer touches your thoughts so that you would understand that history tells the story of the way small numbers of individual hold to the feudal beliefs of enslaving others. That slavery does not have to be overt. This word would conjures ideas of what many of us Founders fought against from the beginning yet with that, it applies in a modern sense to what de Tocqueville wrote would happen to the United States. More terrible, as de Tocqueville wrote, is that the majority of the citizenry is willing to accept the cloak of slavery for security by clamoring in your modern times for the god of environmentalism, humanis and economy over the truths of Liberty.

### Original - [Boston Gazette, October 14, 1771.]

Messieurs EDES & GILL,

"Ambition saw that stooping Rome could bear A MASTER, nor had Virtue to be free."

I Believe that no people ever yet groaned under the heavy yoke of slavery, but when they deserv'd it. This may be called a severe censure upon by far the greatest part of the nations in the world who are involv'd in the misery of servitude: But however they may be thought by some to deserve commiseration, the censure is just. Zuinglius, one of the first reformers, in his friendly admonition to the republic of the Switzers, discourses much of his countrymens throwing off the yoke: He says, that they who lie under oppression deserve what they suffer, and a great more; and he bids them perish with their oppressors. The truth is, All might be free if they valued freedom, and defended it as they ought. Is it possible that millions could be enslaved by a few, which is a notorious fact, if all possessed the independent spirit of Brutus, who to his immortal honor, expelled the proud Tyrant of Rome, and his "royal and rebellious race?" If therefore a people will not be free; if they have not virtue enough to maintain their liberty against a presumptuous invader, they deserve no pity, and are to be treated with contempt and ignominy. Had not Caesar seen that Rome was ready to stoop, he would not have dared to make himself the master of that once brave people. He was indeed, as a great writer observes, a smooth and subtle tyrant, who led them gently into slavery; "and on his brow, 'ore daring vice deluding virtue smil'd". By pretending to be the peoples greatest friend, he gain'd the ascendancy over them: By beguiling arts, hypocrisy and flattery, which are even more fatal than the sword, he obtain'd that supreme power which his ambitious soul had long thirsted for: The people were finally prevail'd upon to consent to their own ruin: By the force of perswasion, or rather by cajoling arts and tricks always made use of by men who have ambitious views, they enacted their Lex Regia: whereby Quod placuit principi legis habuit vigorem; that is, the Will and pleasure of the Prince had the force of law. His minions had taken infinite pains to paint to their imaginations the god-like virtues of Caesar: They first persuaded them to believe that he was a deity, and then to sacrifice to him those Rights and Liberties which their ancestors had so long maintained, with unexampled bravery, and with blood & treasure. By this act they fixed a precedent fatal to all posterity: The Roman people

afterwards, influenced no doubt by this pernicious example, renew'd it to his successors, not at the end of every ten years, but for life. They transfer'd all their right and power to Charles the Great: In eum transtulit omne suum jus et potestatem. Thus, they voluntarily and ignominiously surrendered their own liberty, and exchanged a free constitution for a TYRANNY!

It is not my design at present to form the comparison between the state of this country now, and that of the Roman Empire in those dregs of time; or between the disposition of Caesar, and that of --- (*the present administration*); The comparison, I confess, would not in all parts hold good: The Tyrant of Rome, to do him justice, had learning, courage, and great abilities. It behoves us however to awake and advert to the danger we are in. **The Tragedy of American Freedom**, it is to be feared is nearly completed: A Tyranny seems to be at the very door. It is to little purpose then to go about coolly to rehearse the gradual steps that have been taken, the means that have been used, and the instruments employed, *to encompass the ruin of the public liberty*: We know them and we detest them. But what will this avail, if we have not courage and resolution to prevent the completion of their system?

Our enemies would fain have us *lie down on the bed of sloth and security*, and persuade ourselves that there is no danger. **They are daily administering the opiate with multiplied arts and delusions**, and I am sorry to observe, that the gilded pill is so alluring to some who call themselves the friends of Liberty. But is there no danger when the very foundations of our civil constitution tremble? When an attempt was first made to disturb the corner-stone of the fabric, we were universally and justly alarmed: And can we be cool spectators, when we see it already removed from its place? With what resentment and indignation did we first receive the intelligence of a design to make us tributary, not to natural enemies, but infinitely more humiliating, to fellow subjects? **And yet with unparalleled insolence we are told to be quiet**, when we see that very money which is torn from us by lawless force, made use of still further to oppress us - to feed and pamper a set of infamous wretches, who swarm like the locusts of Egypt; and some of them expect to revel in wealth and riot on the spoils of our country. Is it a time for us to sleep when our free government is essentially changed, and a new one is forming upon a quite different system? A government without the least dependance upon the people: A government under the absolute controul of a minister of state; upon whose sovereign dictates is to depend not only the time when, and the place where, the legislative assembly shall sit, but whether it shall sit at all: And if it is allowed to meet, it shall be liable immediately to be thrown out of existence, if in any one point it fails in obedience to his arbitrary mandates. Have we not already seen specimens of what we are to expect under such a government, in the instructions which Mr. HUTCHINSON has received, and which he has publicly avow'd, and declared he is bound to obey? By one, he is to refuse his assent to a tax-bill, unless the Commissioners of the Customs and other favorites are exempted: And if these may be freed from taxes by the order of a minister, may not all his tools and drudges, or any others who are subservient to his designs, expect the same indulgence? By another he is to forbid to pass a grant of the assembly to any agent, but one to whose election he has given his consent; which is in effect to put it out of our power to take the necessary and legal steps for the redress of those grievances which we suffer by the arts and machinations of ministers, and their minions here. *What*

*difference is there between the present state of this province, which in course will be the deplorable state of all America, and that of Rome, under the law before mention'd?* The difference is only this, that they gave their formal consent to the change, which we have not yet done. But let us be upon our guard against even a negative submission; for agreeable to the sentiments of a celebrated writer, who thoroughly understood his subject, *if we are voluntarily silent, as the conspirators would have us to be, it will be consider'd as an approbation of the change.* "By the fundamental laws of England, the two houses of parliament in concert with the King, exercise the legislative power: But if the two houses should be so infatuated, as to resolve to suppress their powers, and invest the King with the full and absolute government, certainly the nation would not suffer it." And if a minister shall usurp the supreme and absolute government of America, and set up his instructions as laws in the colonies, and their Governors shall be so weak or so wicked, as for the sake of keeping their places, to be made the instruments in putting them in execution, *who will presume to say that the people have not a right, or that it is not their indispensable duty to God and their Country, by all rational means in their power to RESIST THEM.*

"Be firm, my friends, nor let UNMANLY SLOTH Twine round your hearts indissoluble chains. Ne'er yet by force was freedom overcome. Unless CORRUPTION first dejects the pride, And guardian vigour of the free-born soul, All crude attempts of violence are vain. Determined, hold Your INDEPENDENCE; for, that once destroy'd, Unfounded Freedom is a morning dream."

**The liberties of our Country, the freedom of our civil constitution are worth defending at all hazards: And it is our duty to defend them against all attacks. We have receiv'd them as a fair Inheritance from our worthy Ancestors: They purchas'd them for us with toil and danger and expence of treasure and blood; and transmitted them to us with care and diligence.** It will bring an everlasting mark of infamy on the present generation, enlightned as it is, if we should suffer them to be wrested from us by violence without a struggle; or be cheated out of them by the artifices of false and designing men. *Of the latter we are in most danger at present:* Let us therefore be aware of it. Let us contemplate our forefathers and posterity; and resolve to maintain the rights bequeath'd to us from the former, for the sake of the latter. Instead of sitting down satisfied with the efforts we have already made, which is the wish of our enemies, the necessity of the times, more than ever, calls for our utmost circumspection, deliberation, fortitude and perseverance. Let us remember, that, "if we suffer tamely a lawless attack upon our liberty, we encourage it, and involve others in our doom." It is a very serious consideration, which should deeply impress our minds, that millions yet unborn may be the miserable sharers in the event.

CANDIDUS.

### **Modern Comments and Application:**

My fears are great in that again, the general citizenry of your modern age will not receive the benefits of the true Founding wisdom that uncompromised history can instruct. As written in this 1771 article, Alexis de Tocqueville wrote in 1831 in Chapter

VI of his book two a discussion regarding the tyranny that occurred during the Roman times. More so, de Tocqueville was concerned that the America and other Christian democracies would fall to a despotism not ever been recognized before. He described it in such a manner that you in the modern United States might finally be able to see:

“But it would seem that if despotism were to be established amongst the democratic nations of our days, it might assume a different character; it would be more extensive and more mild; it would degrade men without tormenting them. I do not question, that in an age of instruction and equality like our own, sovereigns might more easily succeed in collecting all political power into their own hands, and might interfere more habitually and decidedly within the circle of private interests, than any sovereign of antiquity could ever do. But this same principle of equality which facilitates despotism, tempers its rigor. We have seen how the manners of society become more humane and gentle in proportion as men become more equal and alike. When no member of the community has much power or much wealth, tyranny is, as it were, without opportunities and a field of action. As all fortunes are scanty, the passions of men are naturally circumscribed--their imagination limited, their pleasures simple. This universal moderation moderates the sovereign himself, and checks within certain limits the inordinate extent of his desires.

Independently of these reasons drawn from the nature of the state of society itself,... When I consider the petty passions of our contemporaries, the mildness of their manners, the extent of their education, the purity of their religion, the gentleness of their morality, their regular and industrious habits, and the restraint which they almost all observe in their vices no less than in their virtues, I have no fear that they will meet with tyrants in their rulers, but rather guardians. I think then that the species of oppression by which democratic nations are menaced is unlike anything which ever before existed in the world:... I am trying myself to choose an expression which will accurately convey the whole of the idea I have formed of it, but in vain; the old words "despotism" and "tyranny" are inappropriate: the thing itself is new; and since I cannot name it, I must attempt to define it.”

As was mentioned in the third paragraph that “Our enemies would fain have us lie down on the bed of sloth and security,” having you receive the “daily administering the opiate with multiplied arts and delusions” via the modern media leads then to what de Tocqueville describes where the citizens will see “petty and paltry pleasures with which they glut their lives.” And that they will “live apart” from neighbors and children such that “he exists but in himself and for himself alone.” Above this segregated citizenry, de Tocqueville view the future, your present, sees a “race of men stands an immense and tutelary (*a guardian, patron or protector*) power, which takes upon itself alone to secure their gratifications, and to watch over their fate. That power is absolute, minute, regular, provident, and mild. It would be like the authority of a parent, if, like that authority, its object was to prepare men for manhood; but it seeks on the contrary to keep them in perpetual childhood: it is well content that the people should rejoice,

provided they think of nothing but rejoicing. For their happiness such a government willingly labors, but it chooses to be the sole agent and the only arbiter of that happiness: it provides for their security, foresees and supplies their necessities, facilitates their pleasures, manages their principal concerns, directs their industry, regulates the descent of property, and subdivides their inheritances--what remains, but to spare them all the care of thinking and all the trouble of living?"

Your present situation is that of not understanding Liberty to the extent that de Tocqueville describes your condition with agency regulations and burdens at every level manipulating you the 'sheeple' - "After having thus successively taken each member of the community in its powerful grasp, and fashioned them at will, the supreme power then extends its arm over the whole community. It covers the surface of society with a net-work of small complicated rules, minute and uniform, through which the most original minds and the most energetic characters cannot penetrate, to rise above the crowd. The will of man is not shattered, but softened, bent, and guided: men are seldom forced by it to act, but they are constantly restrained from acting: such a power does not destroy, but it prevents existence; it does not tyrannize, but it compresses, enervates (*weakens*), extinguishes, and stupefies (*unable to think clearly*) a people, till each nation is reduced to be nothing better than a flock of timid and industrious animals, of which the government is the shepherd."

Unlike the time of 1771 when the King appointed the governor, your governors and politicians of immense authority are elected. To this concern much was written in the Federalist and Anti-Federalist Papers but I would again direct you to de Tocqueville who visited America in 1831 as he continue writing almost prophetically of your present condition: "Our contemporaries are constantly excited by two conflicting passions; they want to be led, and they wish to remain free: as they cannot destroy either one or the other of these contrary propensities, they strive to satisfy them both at once. They devise a sole, tutelary, and all-powerful form of government, but elected by the people. They combine the principle of centralization and that of popular sovereignty; this gives them a respite; they console themselves for being in tutelage by the reflection that they have chosen their own guardians. Every man allows himself to be put in leading-strings, because he sees that it is not a person or a class of persons, but the people at large that holds the end of his chain. By this system the people shake off their state of dependence just long enough to select their master, and then relapse into it again. A great many persons at the present day are quite contented with this sort of compromise between administrative despotism and the sovereignty of the people; and they think they have done enough for the protection of individual freedom when they have surrendered it to the power of the nation at large.

"...Of all the forms which democratic despotism could assume, the latter would assuredly be the worst. When the sovereign is elective, or narrowly watched by a legislature which is really elective and independent, the oppression which he exercises over individuals is sometimes greater, but it is always less degrading; because every man, when he is oppressed and disarmed, may still imagine, that whilst he yields obedience it is to himself he yields it, and that it is to one of his own inclinations that all the rest give way. In like manner I can understand that when the sovereign represents

the nation, and is dependent upon the people, the rights and the power of which every citizen is deprived, not only serve the head of the State, but the State itself; and that private persons derive some return from the sacrifice of their independence which they have made to the public..." and "...Subjection in minor affairs breaks out every day, and is felt by the whole community indiscriminately. It does not drive men to resistance, but it crosses them at every turn, till they are led to surrender the exercise of their will..." Lastly, "...It is in vain to summon a people, which has been rendered so dependent on the central power, to choose from time to time the representatives of that power; this rare and brief exercise of their free choice, however important it may be, will not prevent them from gradually losing the faculties of thinking, feeling, and acting for themselves, and thus gradually falling below the level of humanity..."

The conclusion for the citizen during your present time and future generations is that you MUST always have a clear and truthful Perspective of Liberty above all else! I can only finish with reiterating the end of the final paragraph in the original - "...Instead of sitting down satisfied with the efforts we have already made, which is the wish of our enemies, the necessity of the times, more than ever, calls for our utmost circumspection, deliberation, fortitude and perseverance. Let us remember, that "if we suffer tamely a lawless attack upon our liberty, we encourage it, and involve others in our doom." It is a very serious consideration, which should deeply impress our minds, that millions yet unborn may be the miserable sharers in the event."