
THE problem of our age is the proper administration of wealth, so that the ties of brotherhood may still bind together the rich and poor in harmonious relationship. The conditions of human life have not only been changed, but revolutionized, within the past few hundred years. In former days there was little difference between the dwelling, dress, food, and environment of the chief and those of his retainers. The Indians are to-day where civilized man then was. When visiting the Sioux, I was led to the wigwam of the chief. It was just like the others in external appearance, and even within the difference was trifling between it and those of the poorest of his braves. The contrast between the palace of the millionaire and the cottage of the laborer with us to-day measures the change which has come with civilization. This change, however, is not to be deplored, but welcomed as highly beneficial. It is well, nay, essential for the progress of the race, that the houses of some should be homes for all that is highest and best in literature and the arts, and for all the refinements of civilization, rather than that none should be so. Much better this great irregularity than universal squalor. Without wealth there can be no Maecenas. The good old times were not good old times. Neither master nor servant was as well situated then as to-day. A relapse to old conditions would be disastrous to both not the least so to him who would sweep away civilization with it. But whether the change be for good or ill, it is upon us, beyond our power to alter, and therefore to be accepted and made the best of. It is a waste of time to criticise the inevitable…

The growing disposition to tax more and more heavily large estates left at death is a cheering indication of the growth of a salutary change in public opinion. The State of Pennsylvania now takes—subject to some exceptions—one-tenth of the property left by its citizens…Of all forms of taxation, this seems the wisest. Men who continue hoarding great sums all their lives, the proper use of which for public ends would work good to the community, should be made to feel that the community, in the form of the state, cannot thus be deprived of its proper share. By taxing estates heavily at death the state marks its condemnation of the selfish millionaire’s unworthy life…It is desirable that nations should go much further in this direction. Indeed, it is difficult to set bounds to the share of a rich man’s estate which should go at his death to the public through the agency of the state, and by all means such taxes should be graduated, beginning at nothing upon moderate sums to dependents, and increasing rapidly as the amounts swell…

In bestowing charity, the main consideration should be to help those who will help themselves; to provide part of the means by which those who desire to improve may do so; to give those who desire to rise the aids by which they may rise; to assist, but rarely or never to do all. Neither the individual nor the race is improved by alms-giving. Those worthy of assistance, except in rare cases, seldom require assistance. The really valuable men of the race never do, except in cases of accident or sudden change. Everyone has, of course, cases of individuals brought to his own knowledge where temporary assistance can do genuine good, and these he will not overlook. But the amount which can be wisely given by the individual for individuals is necessarily limited by his lack of knowledge of the circumstances connected with each. He is the only true reformer who is as careful and as anxious not to aid the unworthy as he is to aid the worthy, and, perhaps, even more so, for in alms-giving more injury is probably done by rewarding vice than by relieving virtue…

[T]he best means of benefiting the community is to place within its reach the ladders upon which the aspiring can rise—free libraries, parks, and means of recreation, by which men are helped in body and mind; works of art, certain to give pleasure and improve the public taste, and public institutions of various kinds, which will improve the general condition of the people; in this manner returning their surplus wealth to the mass of their fellows in the forms best calculated to do them lasting good. Thus is the problem of Rich and Poor to be solved. The laws of accumulation will be left free; the laws of distribution free. Individualism will continue, but the millionaire will be but a trustee for the poor; intrusted for a season with a great part of the increased wealth of the community, but administering it for the community far better than it could or would have done for itself…

[T]he man who dies leaving behind him millions of available wealth, which was his to administer during life, will pass away unwept, unhonored, and unsung, no matter to what uses he leaves the dross which he cannot take with him. Of such as these the public verdict will then be: The man who dies thus rich dies disgraced.

Andrew Carnegie offered the town of New Castle, Pennsylvania, fifty thousand dollars for a public library in 1901…

[S]uch donations are inimical to that independence American manhood is assumed to possess (on general principles) and especially so in this case where such flagrant injustice, even to murder, has been done to those whose toil is represented in every dollar of the money thus tendered. It was well said by a delegate that between the lines of the books thus obtained one could easily see the sweat and blood of thousands of workers and on the margins of every page the tragedy of Homestead.

The spirit of hero-worship that prompts the acceptance of such gifts and that looks upon structures thus erected as monuments to the memory of the donor is only another form of manifesting the spirit for the monarch: a recognition of the divine right of kings on the one hand and utter disregard of how the money was made on the other.

To erect such a library here and by its partisan, outspoken influence induce our children to look upon it as a logical, necessary and unavoidable method of obtaining certain benefits, tends to destroy in the minds any idea of national justice or human rights and makes of them willing supplicants at the mercy of this system of corporate greed which deals out a part of the sum in charity it originally appropriated from the producer to whom it alone rightfully belongs, which sum if they had fully received would have enabled them to have owned a library instead of now being, as are all others who are similarly robbed, the objects of charity.

It would be something like a semblance of justice if these donations were made to the widows and orphans at Homestead. We deem them as worthy of remembrance as the Maine. A city will enrich enormously a few men and then be itself an object of charity. We, therefore, condemn this library move as an insult to him it is said will benefit most, the working man; he does not want charity but justice.


Resolved, That the practical question for an American Fourth of July is not between freedom and slavery, but between wealth and poverty. For if it is true that laborers ought to have as little as possible of the wealth they produce, South Carolina slave-holders were right and the Massachusetts abolitionists were wrong. Because, when the working classes are denied everything but the barest necessities of life, they have no decent use for liberty. . . .

Slavery is . . . the child of poverty, instead of poverty the child of slavery: and freedom is the child of wealth, instead of wealth the child of freedom. The only road, therefore, to universal freedom is the road that leads to universal wealth.

Resolved, That while the Fourth of July was heralded a hundred years ago in the name of Liberty, we now herald this day in behalf of the great economic measure of Eight Hours, or shorter day’s work for wageworkers everywhere . . . because more leisure, rest and thought will cultivate habits, customs, and expenditures that mean higher wages: and the world’s highest paid laborers now furnish each other with vastly more occupations or days’ work than the lowest paid workers can give to one another. . . . [And] if the worker’s power to buy increases with his power to do, granaries and warehouses will empty their pockets, and farms and factories fill up with producers. . . .

And we call to the workers of the whole civilized world, especially those of France, Germany, and Great Britain, to join hands with the laborers of the United States in this mighty movement. . . .

On the . . . issue of eight hours, there-fore, or less hours, we join hands with all, regardless of politics, nationality, color, religion, or sex; knowing no friends or foes except as they aid or oppose this long-postponed and world-wide movement.

And for the soundness of our political economy, as well as the rectitude of our intentions, we confidently and gladly appeal to the wiser statesmanship of the civilized world.
William Graham Sumner, *What Social Classes Owe to Each Other* (1883)

The humanitarians, philanthropists, and reformers, looking at the facts of life as they present themselves….see wealth and poverty side by side. They note great inequality of social position and social chances. They eagerly set about the attempt to account for what they see, and to devise schemes for remedying what they do not like… In all these schemes and projects the organized intervention of society through the State is either planned or hoped for, and the State is thus made to become the protector and guardian of certain classes. The agents who are to direct the State action are, of course, the reformers and philanthropists. . . . On the theories of the social philosophers to whom I have referred, we should get a new maxim of judicious living: Poverty is the best policy. If you get wealth, you will have to support other people; if you do not get wealth, it will be the duty of other people to support you….

In our modern state, and in the United States more than anywhere else, the social structure is based on contract, and status is of the least importance….In a state based on contract sentiment is out of place in any public or common affairs. It is relegated to the sphere of private and personal relations. . . .

A society based on contract is a society of free and independent men, who form ties without favor or obligation, and cooperate without cringing or intrigue. A society based on contract, therefore, gives the utmost room and chance for individual development, and for all the self-reliance and dignity of a free man. That a society of free men, cooperating under contract, is by far the strongest society which has ever yet existed; that no such society has ever yet developed the full measure of strength of which it is capable; and that the only social improvements which are now conceivable lie in the direction of more complete realization of a society of free men united by contract, are points which cannot be controverted. It follows, however, that one man, in a free state, cannot claim help from, and cannot be charged to give help to, another. . . .

We each owe it to the other to guarantee rights. Rights do not pertain to results, but only to chances. They pertain to the conditions of the struggle for existence, not to any of the results of it; to the pursuit of happiness, not to the possession of happiness. It cannot be said that each one has a right to have some property, because if one man had such a right some other man or men would be under a corresponding obligation to provide him with some property. Each has a right to acquire and possess property if he can. . . . If we take rights to pertain to results, and then say that rights must be equal, we come to say that men have a right to be equally happy, and so on in all the details. Rights should be equal, because they pertain to chances, and all ought to have equal chances so far as chances are provided or limited by the action of society. This, however, will not produce equal results, but it is right just because it will produce unequal results—that is, results which shall be proportioned to the merits of individuals.

The men who have not done their duty in this world never can be equal to those who have done their duty more or less well. If words like wise and foolish, thrifty and extravagant, prudent and negligent, have any meaning in language, then it must make some difference how people behave in this world, and the difference will appear in the position they acquire in the body of society, and in relation to the chances of life. They may, then, be classified in reference to these facts. Such classes always will exist; no other social distinctions can endure. If, then, we look to the origin and definition of these classes, we shall find it impossible to deduce any obligations which one of them bears to the other. The class distinctions simply result from the different degrees of success with which men have availed themselves of the chances which were presented to them. Instead of endeavoring to redistribute the acquisitions which have been made between the existing classes, our aim should be to increase, multiply, and extend the chances. Such is the work of civilization. Every old error or abuse which is removed opens new chances of development to all the new energy of society. Every improvement in education, science, art, or government expands the chances of man on earth. Such expansion is no guarantee of equality. On the contrary, if there be liberty, some will profit by the chances eagerly and some will neglect them altogether. Therefore, the greater the chances, the more unequal will be the fortune of these two sets of men. So it ought to be, in all justice and right reason.
Dennis Kearney, President, and H. L. Knight, Secretary, Workingman’s Party of California, "Appeal from California. The Chinese Invasion. Workingmen’s Address," Indianapolis Times, 28 February 1878.

Our moneyed men have ruled us for the past thirty years. Under the flag of the slaveholder they hoped to destroy our liberty. Failing in that, they have rallied under the banner of the millionaire, the banker and the land monopolist, the railroad king and the false politician, to effect their purpose.

We have permitted them to become immensely rich against all sound republican policy, and they have turned upon us to sting us to death. They have seized upon the government by bribery and corruption. They have made speculation and public robbery a science. They have loaded the nation, the state, the county, and the city with debt. They have stolen the public lands. They have grasped all to themselves, and by their unprincipled greed brought a crisis of unparalleled distress on forty millions of people, who have natural resources to feed, clothe and shelter the whole human race...

We, here in California, feel it as well as you. We feel that the day and hour has come for the Workingmen of America to depose capital and put Labor in the Presidential chair, in the Senate and Congress, in the State House, and on the Judicial Bench. We are with you in this work. Workingmen must form a party of their own, take charge of the government, dispose gilded fraud, and put honest toil in power.

In our golden state all these evils have been intensified. Land monopoly has seized upon all the best soil in this fair land. A few men own from ten thousand to two hundred thousand acres each. The poor Laborer can find no resting place, save on the barren mountain, or in the trackless desert. Money monopoly has reached its grandest proportions. Here, in San Francisco, the palace of the millionaire looms up above the hovel of the starving poor with as wide a contrast as anywhere on earth.

To add to our misery and despair, a bloated aristocracy has sent to China—the greatest and oldest despotism in the world—for a cheap working slave. It takes the slums of Asia to find the meanest slave on earth—the Chinese coolie—and imports him here to meet the free American in the Labor market, and still further widen the breach between the rich and the poor, still further to degrade white Labor.

These cheap slaves fill every place. Their dress is scant and cheap. Their food is rice from China. They hedge twenty in a room, ten by ten. They are whipped curs, abject in docility, mean, contemptible and obedient in all things. They have no wives, children or dependents.

They are imported by companies, controlled as serfs, worked like slaves, and at last go back to China with all their earnings. They are in every place, they seem to have no sex. Boys work, girls work; it is all alike to them.

The father of a family is met by them at every turn. Would he get work for himself? Ah! A stout Chinaman does it cheaper. Will he get a place for his oldest boy? He can not. His girl? Why, the Chinaman is in her place too! Every door is closed. He can only go to crime or suicide, his wife and daughter to prostitution, and his boys to hoodlumism and the penitentiary.

Do not believe those who call us savages, rioters, incendiaries, and outlaws. We seek our ends calmly, rationally, at the ballot box. So far good order has marked all our proceedings. But, we know how false, how inhuman, our adversaries are. We know that if gold, if fraud, if force can defeat us, they will all be used. And we have resolved that they shall not defeat us. We shall arm. We shall meet fraud and falsehood with defiance, and force with force, if need be.

We are men, and propose to live like men in this free land, without the contamination of slave labor, or die like men, if need be, in asserting the rights of our race, our country, and our families.

California must be all American or all Chinese. We are resolved that it shall be American, and are prepared to make it so. May we not rely upon your sympathy and assistance?

With great respect for the Workingman’s Party of California.
Henry George, *An Analysis of the Crime of Poverty* (1885)

I should like to show you . . . that poverty is a crime. I do not mean that it is a crime to be poor. Murder is a crime; but it is not a crime to be murdered; and a man who is in poverty, I look upon, not as a criminal in himself, so much as the victim of a crime for which others, as well perhaps as himself, are responsible.

But while a man who chooses to be poor cannot be charged with crime, it is certainly a crime to force poverty on others. And it seems to me clear that the great majority of those who suffer from poverty are poor not from their own particular faults, but because of conditions imposed by society at large. Therefore I hold that poverty is a crime—not an individual crime, but a social crime, a crime for which we all, poor as well as rich, are responsible. . . .

If poverty is appointed by [God], then it is no crime; but if poverty is unnecessary, then it is a crime for which society is responsible and for which society must suffer. I hold...that poverty is utterly unnecessary. It is not by the decree of the Almighty, but it is because of our own injustice, our own selfishness, our own ignorance, that this scourge, worse than any pestilence, ravages our civilisation, bringing want and suffering and degradation, destroying souls as well as bodies...And yet the peculiar characteristic of this modern poverty of ours is that it is deepest where wealth most abounds...

I say that all this poverty and the ignorance that flows from it is unnecessary; I say that there is no natural reason why we should not all be rich, in the sense, not of having more than each other, but in the sense of all having enough to completely satisfy all physical wants; of all having enough to get such an easy living that we could develop the better part of humanity.

There is a cause for this poverty; and, if you trace it down, you will find its root in a primary injustice... There is one sufficient cause that is common to all nations; and that is the appropriation as the property of some of that natural element on which and from which all must live. . . .

Now, think of it—is not land monopolisation a sufficient reason for poverty?...All that man produces comes from land; all productive labour, in the final analysis, consists in working up land; or materials drawn from land, into such forms as fit them for the satisfaction of human wants and desires. Why, man’s very body is drawn from the land. Children of the soil, we come from the land, and to the land we must return. . . . Therefore he who holds the land on which and from which another man must live, is that man’s master; and the man is his slave. The man who holds the land on which I must live can command me to life or to death just as absolutely as though I were his chattel. Talk about abolishing slavery—we have not abolished slavery; we have only abolished one rude form of it, chattel slavery. There is a deeper and a more insidious form, a more cursed form yet before us to abolish, in this industrial slavery that makes a man a virtual slave, while taunting him and mocking him with the name of freedom...

Did you ever think of the utter absurdity and strangeness of the fact that, all over the civilised world, the working classes are the poor classes?...Nature gives to labour, and to labour alone; there must be human work before any article of wealth can be produced; and in the natural state of things the man who toiled honestly and well would be the rich man, and he who did not work would be poor. We have so reversed the order of nature that we are accustomed to think of the workingman as a poor man...

[W]hen you pay a man for land, what are you paying him for? You are paying for something that no man has produced; you pay him for something that was here before man was, or for a value that was created, not by him individually, but by the community of which you are a part. I cannot go over all the points I would like to try, but I wish to call your attention to the utter absurdity of private property in land!

[T]he way of getting rid of land monopoly . . . is not . . . to divide up the land. All that is necessary is to divide up the income that comes from the land. In that way we can secure absolute equality; nor could the adoption of this principle involve any rude shock or violent change. It can be brought about gradually and easily by abolishing taxes that now rest upon capital, labour and improvements, and raising all our public revenues by the taxation of land values; and the longer you think of it the clearer you will see that in every possible way will it be a benefit.
Emma Goldman discusses the Homestead strike of 1892 in her autobiography, Living My Life (1931).

It was May 1892. News from Pittsburgh announced that trouble had broken out between the Carnegie Steel Company and its employees organized in the Amalgamated Association of Iron and Steel Workers. It was one of the biggest and most efficient labour bodies of the country, consisting mostly of Americans, men of decision and grit, who would assert their rights. The Carnegie Company, on the other hand, was a powerful corporation, known as a hard master. It was particularly significant that Andrew Carnegie, its president, had temporarily turned over the entire management to the company’s chairman, Henry Clay Frick, a man known for his enmity to labour. Frick was also the owner of extensive coke-fields, where unions were prohibited and the workers were ruled with an iron hand.

The high tariff on imported steel had greatly boomed the American steel industry. The Carnegie Company had practically a monopoly of it and enjoyed unprecedented prosperity. Its largest mills were in Homestead, near Pittsburgh, where thousands of workers were employed, their tasks requiring long training and high skill. Wages were arranged between the company and the union, according to a sliding scale based on the prevailing market price of steel products. The current agreement was about to expire, and the workers presented a new wage schedule, calling for an increase because of the higher market prices and enlarged output of the mills.

The philanthropic Andrew Carnegie conveniently retired to his castle in Scotland, and Frick took full charge of the situation. He declared that henceforth the sliding scale would be abolished. The company would make no more agreements with the Amalgamated Association; it would itself determine the wages to be paid. In fact, he would not recognize the union at all. He would not treat with the employees collectively, as before. He would close the mills, and the men might consider themselves discharged. Thereafter they would have to apply for work individually, and the pay would be arranged with every worker separately. Frick curtly refused the peace advances of the workers' organization, declaring that there was “nothing to arbitrate.” Presently the mills were closed. “Not a strike, but a lockout,” Frick announced. It was an open declaration of war.

Feeling ran high in Homestead and vicinity. The sympathy of the entire country was with the men. Even the most conservative part of the press condemned Frick for his arbitrary and drastic methods. They charged him with deliberately provoking a crisis that might assume national proportions, in view of the great numbers of men locked out by Frick’s action, and the probable effect upon affiliated unions and on related industries.

Labour throughout the country was aroused. The steel-workers declared that they were ready to take up the challenge of Frick: they would insist on their right to organize and to deal collectively with their employers. Their tone was manly, ringing with the spirit of their rebellious forebears of the Revolutionary War.

Far away from the scene of the impending struggle, in our little ice-cream parlour in the city of Worcester, we eagerly followed developments…Entire nights we would sit up discussing the various phases of the situation, almost engulfed by the possibilities of the gigantic struggle.

One afternoon a customer came in for an ice-cream, while I was alone in the store. As I set the dish down before him, I caught the large headlines of his paper: “LATEST DEVELOPMENTS IN HOMESTEAD — FAMILIES OF STRIKERS EVICTED FROM THE COMPANY HOUSES—WOMAN IN CONFINEMENT CARRIED OUT INTO STREET BY SHERIFFS.” I read over the man’s shoulder Frick’s dictum to the workers: he would rather see them dead than concede to their demands, and he threatened to import Pinkerton detectives. The brutal bluntness of the account, the inhumanity of Frick towards the evicted mother, inflamed my mind…

I locked up the store and ran full speed the three blocks to our little flat. It was Homestead, not Russia; I knew it now. We belonged in Homestead. The boys, resting for the evening shift, sat up as I rushed into the room, newspaper clutched in my hand. “What has happened, Emma? You look terrible!” I could not speak. I handed them the paper.

Sasha was the first on his feet. “Homestead!” he exclaimed. “I must go to Homestead!” I flung my arms around him, crying out his name. I, too, would go. “We must go tonight,” he said; “the great moment has come at
last!” Being internationalists, he added, it mattered not to us where the blow was struck by the workers; we must be with them. We must bring them our great message and help them see that it was not only for the moment that they must strike, but for all time, for a free life, for anarchism. Russia had many heroic men and women, but who was there in America? Yes, we must go to Homestead, tonight!...

On the way we discussed our immediate plans. First of all, we would print a manifesto to the steel-workers. We would have to find somebody to translate it into English, as we were still unable to express our thoughts correctly in that tongue. We would have the German and English texts printed in New York and take them with us to Pittsburgh. With the help of the German comrades there, meetings could be organized for me to address. Fedya was to remain in New York till further developments.

From the station we went straight to the flat of Mollock, an Austrian comrade we had met in the Autonomie group. He was a baker who worked at night; but Peppie, his wife, with her two children was at home. We were sure she could put us up. She was surprised to see the three of us march in, bag and baggage, but she made us welcome, fed us, and suggested that we go to bed. But we had other things to do.

Sasha and I went in search of Claus Timmermann, an ardent German anarchist we knew. He had considerable poetic talent and wrote forceful propaganda. In fact, he had been the editor of an anarchist paper in St. Louis before coming to New York. He was a likable fellow and entirely trustworthy, though a considerable drinker. We felt that Claus was the only person we could safely draw into our plan. He caught our spirit at once. The manifesto was written that afternoon. It was a flaming call to the men of Homestead to throw off the yoke of capitalism, to use their present struggle as a stepping-stone to the destruction of the wage system, and to continue towards social revolution and anarchism.

A few days after our return to New York the news was flashed across the country of the slaughter of steel-workers by Pinkertons. Frick had fortified the Homestead mills, built a high fence around them. Then, in the dead of night, a barge packed with strike-breakers, under protection of heavily armed Pinkerton thugs, quietly stole up the Monongahela River. The steel-men had learned of Frick’s move. They stationed themselves along the shore, determined to drive back Frick’s hirelings. When the barge got within range, the Pinkertons had opened fire, without warning, killing a number of Homestead men on the shore, among them a little boy, and wounding scores of others.

The wanton murders aroused even the daily papers. Several came out in strong editorials, severely criticizing Frick. He had gone too far; he had added fuel to the fire in the labour ranks and would have himself to blame for any desperate acts that might come…

Sasha broke the silence. “Frick is the responsible factor in this crime,” he said; “he must be made to stand the consequences.” It was the psychological moment for an Attentat; the whole country was aroused, everybody was considering Frick the perpetrator of a cold-blooded murder. A blow aimed at Frick would re-echo in the poorest hovel, would call the attention of the whole world to the real cause behind the Homestead struggle. It would also strike terror in the enemy’s ranks and make them realize that the proletariat of America had its avengers.

Sasha had never made bombs before, but Most’s Science of Revolutionary Warfare was a good text-book. He would procure dynamite from a comrade he knew on Staten Island. He had waited for this sublime moment to serve the Cause, to give his life for the people. He would go to Pittsburgh. “We will go with you!” Fedya and I cried together. But Sasha would not listen to it. He insisted that it was unnecessary and criminal to waste three lives on one man.

We sat down, Sasha between us, holding our hands. In a quiet and even tone he began to unfold to us his plan. He would perfect a time regulator for the bomb that would enable him to kill Frick, yet save himself. Not because he wanted to escape. No; he wanted to live long enough to justify his act in court, so that the American people might know that he was not a criminal, but an idealist.

“I will kill Frick,” Sasha said, “and of course I shall be condemned to death. I will die proudly in the assurance that I gave my life for the people. But I will die by my own hand, like Lingg. Never will I permit our enemies to kill me.”
Peter Clark, Message of support for railroad strikers, The Cincinnati Commercial, July 23, 1877.

But when [workers] see high railroad officials receiving the salary of princes, when they hear of dividends in stock and railroad bonds, they cannot understand why there is no money for the man whose labor earns these vast sums....When they complain, they are told that they are at liberty to quit and take their services elsewhere. This is equivalent to telling them that they are at liberty to go and starve....Hence they make the effort to obtain an increase in wages and to retain their places at the same time. Understanding their motive, and the dire necessity by which they are driven, I pity, but I cannot condemn them....

Then too, the door of justice seems shut in their faces. They have no representation on the Board of Directors. Every state has laws punishing conspiracy, punishing riot and unlawful assemblages, but no state has laws providing for the examination and redress of the grievances of which these men complain. The whole force of the State and National Governments may be invoked by the railroad managers, but the laborer has nothing.
Mary Elizabeth Lease, *Women in the Farmers’ Alliance* (1891)

It must be evident to every intelligent man and woman to-day that there is something radically wrong in the affairs of the Nation. It must be evident to every thinking man and woman that we have reached a crisis in the affairs of this Nation...We are confronted to-day by a crisis in which every instinct of common duty, of justice, and of patriotism demands prompt and decisive action.

[One Republican Senator argued that] there...were two great dangers that menaced the safety, ay, threatened the very existence of this Republic to-day—a corrupt ballot and the tyranny of combined, incorporated, conscienceless capital...[I]n this land of plenty and unlimited resources, the cry of humanity is going up from every corner of this Nation. The plaint of motherhood, the moans of starving children! Capital buys and sells to-day the very heart-beats of humanity.

[Today the American toiler in his bitterness and wrath asks us, Which is the worst, the black slavery that has gone or the white slavery that has come? ...[T]wenty thousand of American millionaires who own one billion five hundred million dollars, gathered from the toils and tears of sixty-four millions of American people, have it in their power to name their Governors and our legislators and representatives and Congressmen—and they do name them, and they have named them for the last quarter of a century, and they have it in their power to fix the price of labor and to fix the price for every ton of coal.]

For one hundred years the speculators, the land-robbers, the pirates and gamblers of this Nation have knocked unceasingly at the door of Congress, and Congress has in every case acceded to their demands. They have gotten money out of the public treasury amounting to tens of millions of dollars. They were permitted to tap the veins of trade and commerce and withdraw from the body politic the circulating medium which is the life-blood of the Nation, and our law-makers term these [acts] constitutional, and when for the first time in one hundred years farmers come timidly knocking at the doors of Congress asking for relief, a howl went up. . . .

[We are living in a day and age when the women of industrial societies and the [Farmers’] Alliance women have become a mighty factor in the politics of this nation; when the mighty dynamite of thought is stirring the hearts of men of this world from centre to circumference, and this thought is crystallizing into action. Organization is becoming the keynote among the farmers of this nation. The farmers, slow to think and slow to act, are to-day thinking for themselves; they have been compelled to think. They have been awakened by the load of oppressive taxation, unjust tariffs, and they find themselves standing to-day on the very brink of their own despair...But to-day these farmers, thank God! are thinking, and also their mothers, wives, and daughters, “their sisters, their cousins, and their aunts.” ...]

Founded upon the eternal principles of truth and right, with special privileges to none, the farmers’ movement could not well exclude the patient burden-bearers of the home. And so we find them opening wide the doors of this new and mighty movement, the Farmer’s Alliance, admitting women into the ranks of the organization, actually recognizing the fact that they are human beings, and treating them as such, with full privileges of membership and promotion. And the women who have borne the heat and the burden of the day were not slow to accept the newly-offered privileges, undeterred by the fact that the new organization was political, though non-partisan, and they gladly accepted the privileges extended them, until we find to-day upwards of half a million women in the Farmers’ Alliance, who have taken up the study of social and political problems, and are studying and investigating the great issues of the day, fully cognizant of the fact that in the political arena alone can these great problems be satisfactorily settled.

You will wonder, perhaps, why the women of the West are interested so much in this great uprising of the common people...[It is because] they accompanied their husbands, sons, and brothers; they came with the roses of health on their cheeks; they left home and friends, school and church, and all which makes life dear to you and me, and turned their faces towards the untried West, willing to brave the dangers of pioneer life upon the lonely prairies with all its privations; their children were born there, and there upon the prairies our little babes lie buried. After all our years of sorrow, loneliness, and privation, we are being robbed of our farms, of our homes, at the rate of five hundred a week, and turned out homeless paupers, outcasts and wanderers, robbed of the best years of our life and our toil. Do you wonder that women are joining the Farmers’ Alliance and the Knights of Labor?
People’s Party (Populist) Platform (1892)

The people are demoralized; most of the States have been compelled to isolate the voters at the polling places to prevent universal intimidation and bribery. The newspapers are largely subsidized or muzzled, public opinion silenced, business prostrated, homes covered with mortgages, labor impoverished, and the land concentrating in the hands of capitalists. The urban workmen are denied the right to organize for self-protection, imported pauperized labor beats down their wages, a hireling standing army, unrecognized by our laws, is established to shoot them down, and they are rapidly degenerating into European conditions. The fruits of the toil of millions are badly stolen to build up colossal fortunes for a few, unprecedented in the history of mankind; and the possessors of these, in turn, despise the Republic and endanger liberty. From the same prolific womb of governmental injustice we breed the two great classes—tramps and millionaires…

We have witnessed for more than a quarter of a century the struggles of the two great political parties for power and plunder, while grievous wrongs have been inflicted upon the suffering people. We charge that the controlling influences dominating both these parties have permitted the existing dreadful conditions to develop without serious effort to prevent or restrain them. Neither do they now promise us any substantial reform. They have agreed together to ignore, in the coming campaign, every issue but…They propose to sacrifice our homes, lives, and children on the altar of mammon; to destroy the multitude in order to secure corruption funds from the millionaires.

[We seek to restore the government of the Republic to the hands of the "plain people," with which class it originated...We believe that the power of government—in other words, of the people—should be expanded (as in the case of the postal service) as rapidly and as far as the good sense of an intelligent people and the teaching of experience shall justify, to the end that oppression, injustice, and poverty shall eventually cease in the land. . . .]

**Platform**

We declare, therefore—

Wealth belongs to him who creates it, and every dollar taken from industry [i.e., from work] without an equivalent is robbery. "If any will not work, neither shall he eat." The interests of rural and civil labor are the same; their enemies are identical.

FINANCE.—We demand a national currency, safe, sound, and flexible issued by the general government only, a full legal tender for all debts, public and private, and that without the use of banking corporations; a just, equitable, and efficient means of distribution direct to the people, at a tax not to exceed 2 per cent, per annum, to be provided as set forth in the sub-treasury plan of the Farmers' Alliance, or a better system; also by payments in discharge of its obligations for public improvements.

1. We demand free and unlimited coinage of silver and gold at the present legal ratio of 16 to 1.
2. We demand that the amount of circulating medium be speedily increased to not less than $50 per capita.
3. We demand a graduated income tax.
4. We believe that the money of the country should be kept as much as possible in the hands of the people, and hence we demand that all State and national revenues shall be limited to the necessary expenses of the government, economically and honestly administered. We demand that postal savings banks be established by the government for the safe deposit of the earnings of the people and to facilitate exchange.

TRANSPORTATION.—Transportation being a means of exchange and a public necessity, the government should own and operate the railroads in the interest of the people. The telegraph and telephone, like the post-office system, being a necessity for the transmission of news, should be owned and operated by the government in the interest of the people.

LAND.—The land, including all the natural sources of wealth, is the heritage of the people, and should not be monopolized for speculative purposes, and alien ownership of land should be prohibited. All land now held by railroads and other corporations in excess of their actual needs, and all lands now owned by aliens should be reclaimed by the government and held for actual settlers only.
Mattie V. Oblinger to George W. Thomas, Grizzie B. Thomas, and Wheeler Thomas Family, June 16, 1873.

Fillmore County Neb
June 16th 1873

Dear Brother & Sister & all of Uncle Wheelers...

The reason I have not written sooner I have not had the time I have wrote a letter almost every sunday to send home and that has occupied most all my leisure time Sunday is rather a poor day for us to get a chance to write too for we have went to Church and sunday school every sunday I have been here two sundays we went about 9 miles the rest of the time we went to Giles [Mattie’s brother, homesteading nearby] the next preaching will be at Giles which is in two weeks The man that preaches is quite old and is a baptist minister but when he preaches he makes no distinction in denominations We have a good sunday school in progress now I suppose there must be about fifty enrolled We have not the means yet to carry on sunday school . . . as they do in older settlements but we have our bibles and hymn books and we all gather together and read a lesson and then ask questions and sing and offer prayers and I think we do about as much good as any sunday school I know it is not quite so interesting as if we had money to buy papers and books I think we have Just as enterpriseing people here as any where

There was methodist preaching yesterday… He said the conference had sent him here so you see we are not entirely out of civilizatian I know if you was here you would not think so I have just as good neighbors as I ever had any where and they are very sociable I was never in a neighborhood where all was as near on equality as they are here Those that have been here have a little the most they all have cows and that is quite a help here I get milk & butter from Mrs Furgison who lives 1/4 of a mile from us get the milk for nothing and pay twelve cents a pound for butter she makes good butter Most all of the people here live in Sod houses and dig outs I like the sod house the best they are the most convenient I expect you think we live miserable because we are in a sod house but I tell you in solid earnest I never enjoyed my self better…

[E]very lick we strike is for our selves and not half for some one else I tell you this is quite a consolation to us who have been renters so long there are no renters here every one is on his own and doing the best he can and not much a head yet for about all that are here was renters and it took about all they had to get here Some come here and put up temporary frame houses thought they could not live in a sod house This fall they are going to build sod houses so they can live . . . comfortable this winter a temporary frame house here is a poor thing a house that is not plastered the wind and dust goes right through and they are very cold A sod house can be built so they are real nice and comfortable build nice walls and then plaster and lay a floor above and below and then they are nice.

Almost every man here does his own work yet for they are not able to hire I think it will be quite different in a few years Uriah has 23 acres of sod corn planted it looks real well I tell you it is encourageing to have out a lot of corn and all your own…

Sam [Mattie’s brother] has sold out to Mr .McClain. He [Sam] had not improved as much as the law requested he should and he was afraid some one would jump his claim and then he would be out he sold very cheap only got fifty dollars I ask him if he was going back with out securing a peice of land he said no I’ll bet I dont go back home with out owning some of this nice prarie he said he was bound to have land here He is going to buy RR land and then he will not have to stay by it I think he will go to Ind[jana] this fall I have not heard him say for certain This is a lonely place for a single man for there are not many young ladies here for them to go with but there are lots coming on a little too young…

Thomas O’Donnell, Testimony before a U.S. Senate Committee (1885)

O’Donnell lived and worked in Fall River, Massachusetts, in the far eastern part of the United States. He was testifying in front of a US Senate Committee about working conditions and poverty.

Blair: Do you have work right along [all the time]?
O’Donnell: No, sir; since that strike we had down in Fall River about three years ago I have not worked much more than half the time, and that has brought my circumstances down very much.

Blair: Why have you not worked more than half the time since then?
O’Donnell: Well, at Fall River if a man has not got a boy to act as “back-boy” it is very hard for him to get along. In a great many cases they discharge men in that work and put in men who have boys.

Blair: Men who have boys of their own?
O’Donnell: Men who have boys of their own capable enough to work in a mill, to earn $.30 or $.40 a day.

Blair: Is the object of that to enable the boy to earn something for himself?
O’Donnell: Well, no; the object is this: They are doing away with a great deal of mule-spinning there and putting in ring-spinning, and for that reason it takes a good deal of small help to run this ring work, and it throws the men out of work. . . . For that reason they get all the small help they can to run these ring-frames. There are so many men in the city to work, and whoever has a boy can have work, and whoever has no boy stands no chance. Probably he may have a few months of work in the summer time, but will be discharged in the fall. That is what leaves me in poor circumstances…

Blair: How much [work] have you had within a year?
O’Donnell: Since Thanksgiving I happened to get work in the Crescent Mill, and worked there exactly thirteen weeks. I got just $1.50 a day, with the exception of a few days that I lost because in following up mule-spinning you are obliged to lose a day once in a while; you can’t follow it up regularly.

Blair: Thirteen weeks would be seventy-eight days, and, at $1.50 a day, that would make $117, less whatever time you lost?

O’Donnell: Yes. I worked thirteen weeks there and ten days in another place, and then there was a dollar I got this week, Wednesday.
Blair: Taking a full year back can you tell how much you have had?
O’Donnell: That would be about fifteen weeks’ work. . . .
Blair: That would be somewhere about $133, if you had not lost any time?
O’Donnell: Yes, sir.

Blair: To support yourself and wife and two children?
O’Donnell: Yes, sir.

Blair: Have you had any help from outside?
O’Donnell: No, sir.
Blair: Do you mean that yourself and wife and two children have had nothing but that for all this time?
O’Donnell: That is all. I got a couple dollars’ worth of coal last winter, and the wood I picked up myself. I goes around with a shovel and picks up clams and wood…

Blair: Why do you not go West on a farm?
O’Donnell: How could I go, walk it?
Blair: Well, I want to know why you do not go out West on a $2,000 farm, or take up a homestead and break it and work it up, and then have it for yourself and family?
O’Donnell: I can’t see how I could get out West. I have got nothing to go with.
Blair: It would not cost you over $1,500.
O’Donnell: Well, I never saw over a $20 bill, and that is when I have been getting a month’s pay at once. If someone would give me $1,500 I will go.
Newspaper articles on violence in the West, 1870s to 1890s.

Sacramento Daily Union, 18 August 1873

Four Murderers Lynched in Arizona. — A dispatch dated at Tucson, Arizona Territory, August 9th, says:

On Wednesday Vicente Hermandy, known as Piedras Negras, a pawnbroker, and his wife were murdered, having their skulls crushed in with a club and jugular veins cut with a knife. During the day $900 reward was subscribed by the citizens. Six men were arrested on suspicion and the citizens believing them to be the criminals, proceeded to extort a confession. The principal murderer, a Mexican named Leonardo Cordova, confessed, fully exposing his associates, one of whom subsequently confessed. They were compelled to disclose the hiding place of the plunder. Next morning a settled determination was expressed to hang the murderers— also John Willis, who killed Robert Swope last November. Two posts, forked at the top, were planted in the ground near the jail door, and upon them was placed a stiff pole about twelve feet in length. To this pole four ropes were fastened, with nooses to each, and two wagons drawn beneath. A Catholic priest desiring to give consolation to the doomed men was allowed the time desired. The four men, John Willis, Leonardo Cordova, Clement Lopez and Jesus Saguaripa, were then brought out of the jail with bandages over their eyes, put in the wagons, the ropes adjusted, the wagons drawn out, and all four men hanged side by side.

Sacramento Daily Union, 5 May 1877

A MURDER FOR A CIRCUS TICKET.

The Mexican murderers, Arias and Chamalis, who were lynched at Santa Cruz on Wednesday, committed the crime for which they suffered, according to their own confession, for an almost inconceivably trivial motive. The statement of Chamalis was that Arias proposed a visit to the circus, and as they had no money it was agreed to procure some by lying in wait for some one and robbing them. They concealed themselves by the roadside, and when De Forest appeared they fired upon and killed him. They found eight dollars upon the body, and having divided this they coolly proceeded to carry out the original programme of going to the circus. There they sat, and probably ate peanuts, and laughed, and enjoyed the performance thoroughly. Evidently they possessed no more conscience than tigers possess. They belonged properly to the brute creation, and if they have met the fate of brutes the fact need only be regretted for the sake of the violated law, which might surely have been depended upon to secure justice upon them. It was a horribly coldblooded, wanton and useless murder, and so motiveless that it is clear the perpetrators were hopeless criminals, to whom assassination was a matter of complete indifference. It is difficult to realize the kind of mentality that can plan a murder for the sake of a visit to the circus, and having carried the plan into execution can calmly enjoy the amusement purchased at so tremendous a price; but these two men possessed that peculiar temperament, and though no doubt the worst use you can put a man to, ordinarily, is to hang him, we really do not see how such wretches could have been more satisfactorily disposed of than upon the gallows.

Sacramento Daily Union, 12 July 1878

Murderer Caught and Lynched.

The Mexican who murdered Mr. Palmerton a few days ago at San Jacinto has been found, and after being identified by Mrs. Palmerton before a Justice of the Peace, was bound over to await the action of the Grand Jury. During the night he was taken from the guard by a posse of men and hanged to a tree. After brutally murdering his victim, he attacked Mrs. Palmerton, cut off two of her fingers, threw her to the floor and stamped her about the head and neck until he thought life was extinct, and then fled.

Sacramento Daily Union, 1 March 1882

THEY MEANT BUSINESS.

It is learned from C. A. McCash, a resident of Adin, Modoc county, who called at this office last evening, that the Vigilantes have been doing some hanging in Big Valley, Lassen county. An old criminal and desperado, by the name of John Adams, a half-breed Mexican, has been
hanging around that portion of the country for some time past stealing horses, committing other depredations, and terrorizing the people. That section is very sparsely settled, and the law's protection is a weak arm indeed. The neighbors assembled, held a consultation, and had a committee wait upon him, and ask him to leave that portion of the country. He laughed at the committee, told them there were not enough men in Lassen county to intimidate, nor in the State to hang him. He boldly asserted that he was an outlaw, and recounted many of his thieving exploits in their neighborhood. When the time had elapsed which the committee had given him to make himself scarce, the desperate fellow still remained. The neighbors again assembled last Friday night, and the verdict of all was that he should be lynched. Accordingly they went that night, about 11 o'clock, to where he was known to be stopping, at a house near the banks of Pit river, secreted themselves, some thirty strong, and watched for his appearance. They were not long in waiting, when they saw him passing from the house to the barn. Immediately he was seized by strong and resolute men, bound, conveyed to a convenient oak tree, and with little ceremony John Adams in a few moments was hanging by the neck, a lifeless corpse.

_Daily Alta California, 1 January 1884_

The Lynched Mexican.

Clifton, December 31st.— The coroner returned from Duncan last night. The verdict of the jury was that the Mexican hung to a tree near that place came to his death at the hands of unknown parties. It is the opinion that this man was hung in a spirit of pure cussedness by the Rustler element on the Gila River, who are anxious to bring on trouble with the Mexicans. A reward will be offered by the Sheriff to-day for information leading to the arrest of the guilty parties. Nicolaus Olguin and his posse will be taken before the Probate Judge in Solomonville to-day for the purpose of having a hearing, and will then probably be released on a writ of habeas corpus.

_Sacramento Daily Union, 22 August 1892_

Murderer Torres Lynched.

Santa Ana, Aug. 21.— Torres, the Mexican laborer, who killed Captain McKelvey, the overseer of the Modjeska ranch, near this city, and who was afterward captured at San Diego, and confessed to the crime, was taken from jail here at 1 o'clock Saturday morning by a mob and hanged from the arm of a telephone pole.

_San Francisco Call, 30 November 1897_

CHOKES A GIRL TO DEATH. Crime for Which a Silver City Mexican Will Be Lynched if Captured.

SILVER CITY, Nov. 29.— Lulu Werney the 14-year-old daughter of William Werney, a rancher living about twentyfive miles south of here, left her home on Saturday to search for a horse. She did not return in the evening and a searching party was organized. Yesterday the body of the girl was found in a gully about two miles from her home. She had been assaulted and then choked to death. Ambrosio Garcia, a Mexican employed as a sheep-herder, disappeared on the same day, as the girl, and that night came to Silver City and told friends that he had committed the crime, but this was not reported to the officers until after he had made his escape. Several posses are now after him and should he be captured it is likely that he will be lynched. Evidence of his guilt is conclusive.
Richard H. Pratt, “The Advantages of Mingling Indians with Whites” (1892)

A great general has said that the only good Indian is a dead one. . . . In a sense, I agree with the sentiment, but only in this: that all the Indian there is in the race should be dead. Kill the Indian in him, and save the man.

We are just now making a great pretence of anxiety to civilize the Indians. I use the word “pretence” purposely, and mean it to have all the significance it can possibly carry.

[Thomas] Jefferson…inaugurated the reservation plan. Jefferson’s reservation was to be the country west of the Mississippi; and he issued instructions to those controlling Indian matters to get the Indians there, and let the Great River be the line between them and the whites. Any method of securing removal—persuasion, purchase, or force—was authorized. Jefferson’s plan became the permanent policy. The removals have generally been accomplished by purchase, and the evils of this are greater than those of all the others combined. . . .

It is a sad day for the Indians when they fall under the assaults of our troops. . . . but a far sadder day is it for them when they fall under the baneful influences of a treaty agreement with the United States whereby they are to receive large annuities, and to be protected on reservations, and held apart from all association with the best of our civilization. The destruction is not so speedy, but it is far more general. . . .

Inscrutable are the ways of Providence. Horrible as were the experiences of its introduction, and of slavery itself, there was concealed in them the greatest blessing that ever came to the Negro race—seven millions of blacks from cannibalism in darkest Africa to citizenship in free and enlightened America; not full, not complete citizenship, but possible—probable—citizenship, and on the highway and near to it.

Left in Africa, surrounded by their fellow-savages, our seven millions of industrious black fellow-citizens would still be savages. Transferred into these new surroundings and experiences, behold the result. They became English-speaking and civilized, because forced into association with English-speaking and civilized people.

The Indians under our care remained savage, because forced back upon themselves and away from association with English-speaking and civilized people, and because of our savage example and treatment of them. . . . We have never made any attempt to civilize them with the idea of taking them into the nation, and all of our policies have been against citizenizing and absorbing them. . . .

A public school system especially for the Indians is a tribal system; and this very fact says to them that we believe them to be incompetent, that they must not attempt to cope with us. Such schools build up tribal pride, tribal purposes, and tribal demands upon the government.

Indian schools are just as well calculated to keep the Indians intact as Indians as Catholic schools are to keep the Catholics intact. Under our principles we have established the public school system, where people of all races may become unified in every way, and loyal to the government; but we do not gather the people of one nation into schools by themselves, and the people of another nation into schools by themselves, but we invite the youth of all peoples into all schools. We shall not succeed in Americanizing the Indian unless we take him in in exactly the same way.

We make our greatest mistake in feeding our civilization to the Indians instead of feeding the Indians to our civilization. . . . We invite the Germans [and other immigrants] to come into our country and communities, and share our customs, our civilization, to be of it; and the result is immediate success. Why not try it on the Indians? Why not invite them into experiences in our communities? Why always invite and compel them to remain a people unto themselves?

It is a great mistake to think that the Indian is born an inevitable savage. He is born a blank, like all the rest of us. Left in the surroundings of savagery, he grows to possess a savage language, superstition, and life. We, left in the surroundings of civilization, grow to possess a civilized language, life, and purpose. Transfer the infant white to the savage surroundings, he will grow to possess a savage language, superstition, and habit. Transfer the savage-born infant to the surroundings of civilization, and he will grow to possess a civilized language and habit.
S. Heath and Moses Heath, Black Exodusters explain reasons for leaving North Carolina (1879).

August 1, 1879

We the people of the 2nd Congressional District, North Carolina, have a Strong Desire to Emigrate to Kanses Land Where we can Have a Home. Reason and why:

We have not our rights in law.

The old former masters do not allow us anything for our labor.

We have not our Right in the Election. We are defrauded by our former masters.

We have not no [right] to make an honest and humble living.

There is no use for the Colored to go to law after their Rights; not one out of 50 gets his Rights.

The Ku [Klux Klan] Reigns.

We Want to Get to a land Where we can Vote and it not be a Crime to the Colored Voters.

Wages is very low [here]

Nearly all of the laborers have families to take care of and many other things we could mention, but by the help of God we intend to make our start to Kansas land. We had Rather Suffer and be free, than to suffer [the] infamous degrades that are Brought upon us [here]

Rev. S Heath

Moses Heath

Lenoir Co., N.C.

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John Solomon Lewis, letter explaining why he left the South for Kansas, June 10, 1879.

You see, I was in debt, and the man I rented land from said every year I must rent again to pay the other year, and so I rents and rents, and each year I gets deeper and deeper in debt. In a fit of madness I one day said to the man I rented from: ‘It’s no use, I works hard and raises big crops and you sells it and keeps the money, and brings me more and more in debt, so I will go somewhere else and try to make headway like white working-men.’ ‘He got very mad and said to me: ‘If you try that job, you will get your head shot away.’ So I told my wife, and she says: ‘Let us take to the woods in the night time.’ Well we took [to] the woods, my wife and four children, and we was three weeks living in the woods waiting for a boat. Then a great many more black people came and we was all together at the landing. Boats came along, but they would not stop, but before long the Grand Tower hove up and we got on board.

Says the captain, ‘Where’s you going?’ Says I, ‘Kansas.’ Says he, ‘You can’t go on this boat.’ Says I, ‘I do; you know who I am. I am a man who was a United States soldier and I know my rights, and if I and my family gets put off, I will go in the United States Court and sue for damages.’ Says the Captain to another boat officer, ‘Better take that nigger or he will make trouble.’

When I landed on the soil, I looked on the ground and I says this is free ground. Then I looked on the heavens, and I says them is free and beautiful heavens. Then I looked within my heart, and I says to myself I wonder why I never was free before? When I knew I had all my family in a free land, I said let us hold a little prayer meeting; so we held a little meeting on the river bank. It was raining but the drops fell from heaven on a free family, and the meeting was just as good as sunshine. We was thankful to God for ourselves and we prayed for those who could not come. I asked my wife did she know the ground she stands on. She said, ‘No!’ I said it is free ground; and she cried like a child for joy.
This was a strike for higher pay by the African American women who worked doing laundry and cleaning for white customers in Atlanta, Georgia.

21 July 1881 “The Washerwoman’s Strike”

The laundry ladies’ efforts to control the prices for washing are still prevalent and no small amount of talk is occasioned thereby. The women have a thoroughly organized association and additions to the membership are being made each day. During the day the house of every colored woman who is not a member of the association is visited and a regular siege begun, and in nearly every instance an addition to the membership is the result. In this way the meetings, which are had every night, are largely attended and generally very demonstrative. Speeches advocating their rights and exhorting the members to remain firm are numerous and frequent. To several families whose washing left home Monday morning the clothing has been returned wet, the woman having become a member of the association after taking the washing away. It is rumored that house help is also on the eve of a strike.

24 July 1881 “The New Steam Laundry”

The washerwomen of Atlanta having ‘struck’ for very unreasonably high prices, a number of our most substantial citizens have quietly gone to work to make up a large cash capital, and will at an early day (as the strike is nearly all subscribed already) start an extensive Steam Laundry. The capacity of a new laundry will be equal to the wants of the whole city. From fifty to one hundred smart Yankee girls experienced in the business, will be employed in running it and the calculation of those having the enterprise in hand, is that at the very moderate charge, say an average of twenty, to thirty cents per dozen the profits will be sufficient to give all the stock holders fair dividends and their washing besides. We are glad to chronicle this movement.

26 July 1881 “The Doughty Washwomen: Holding Out for an Advance in Wages”

The Washerwomen’s strike is assuming vast proportions and despite the apparent independence of the white people, is causing quite an inconvenience among our citizens. In one instance the demand for one dollar per dozen was acceded to. Those who decline to give this price are still wanting washers. Several families who have declined to pay the price demanded, have determined to send their clothing to Marietta where they have secured laundry service. The strikers hold daily meetings and are exhorted by the leaders, who are confident that the demands will be granted. The committees still visit the women and induce them to join the strike and when a refusal is met threats of personal violence are freely indulged in to such an extent as to cause a compromise with their demands. There are some families in Atlanta who have been unable to have any washing done for more than two weeks. Not only the washerwomen, but the cooks, house servants and nurses are asking increases. The combinations are being managed by the laundry ladies.
Ida B. Wells, *Crusade for Justice* (1892)

While I was thus carrying on the work of my newspaper, ... there came the lynching in Memphis which changed the whole course of my life .... Thomas Moss, Calvin McDowell, and Henry Stewart owned and operated a grocery store in a thickly populated suburb.... There was already a grocery owned and operated by a white man who hitherto had had a monopoly on the trade of this thickly populated colored suburb. Thomas's grocery changed all that, and he and his associates were made to feel that they were not welcome by the white grocer ....

One day some colored and white boys quarreled over a game of marbles and the colored boys got the better of the fight which followed .... Then the challenge was issued that the vanquished whites were coming on Saturday night to clean out [Thomas's] Colored People's Grocery Company .... Accordingly the grocery company armed several men and stationed them in the rear of the store on that fatal Saturday night, not to attack but repel a threatened attack .... The men stationed there had seen several white men stealing through the rear door and fired on them without a moment's pause. Three of these men were wounded, and others fled and gave the alarm .... Over a hundred colored men were dragged from their homes and put in jail on suspicion.

All day long on that fateful Sunday white men were permitted *in the jail to look over the imprisoned black men .... The mob took out of their cells Thomas Moss, Calvin McDowell, and Henry Stewart, the three officials of the People's Grocery Company. They were loaded on a switch engine of the railroad which ran back of the jail, carried a mile north of the city limits, and horribly shot to death. One of the morning papers held back its edition in order to supply its readers with the details of that lynching... The mob took possession of the People's Grocery Company, helping themselves to food and drink, and destroyed what they could not eat or steal. The creditors had the place closed and a few days later what remained of the stock was sold at auction. Thus, with the aid of city and county authorities and the daily papers, that white grocer had indeed put an end to his rival Negro grocer as well as to his business.

Like many another person who had read of lynchings in the South, I had accepted the idea meant to be conveyed—that although lynching was irregular and contrary to law and order, unreasoning anger over the terrible crime of rape led to the lynching; that perhaps the brute deserved death anyhow and the mob was justified in taking his life.

But Thomas Moss, Calvin McDowell and Henry Stewart had been lynched in Memphis, one of the leading cities of the South, in which no lynching had taken place before, with just as much brutality as other victims of the mob; and they had committed no crime against white women. This is what opened my eyes to what lynching really was. An excuse to get rid of Negroes who were acquiring wealth and property and thus keep the race terrorized and "keep the nigger down." I then began an investigation of every lynching I read about. I stumbled on the amazing record that every case of rape reported ... became such only when it became public.

Many cases were like that of the lynching which happened in Tunica County, Mississippi. The Associated Press reporter said, "The big burly brute was lynched because he had raped the seven-year-old daughter of the sheriff." I visited the place afterward and saw the girl, who was a grown woman more than seventeen years old. She had been found in the lynched Negro's cabin by her father, who had led the mob against him in order to save his daughter's reputation. That Negro was a helper on the farm ....

It was with these and other stories in mind in that last week in May 1892 that I wrote the following editorial:

Eight Negroes lynched since last issue of the Free Speech. They were charged with killing white men and five with raping white women. Nobody in this section believes the old thread-bare lie that Negro men assault white women. If Southern white men are not careful they will overreach themselves and a conclusion will be drawn which will be very damaging to the moral reputation of their women.

This editorial furnished at last the excuse for doing what the white leaders of Memphis had long been wanting to do: put an end to the Free Speech ....

Having lost my paper, had a price put on my life, and been made an exile from home for hinting at the truth, I felt that I owed it to myself and to
my race to tell the whole truth now that I was where I could do so freely. Accordingly, the fourth week in June, the New York Age had a seven-column article on the front page giving names, dates and places of many lynchings for alleged rape. This article showed conclusively that my editorial in the Free Speech was based on facts of illicit association between black men and white women. Such relationships between white men and colored women were notorious, and had been as long as the two races had lived together in the South. ...

The more I studied the situation, the more I was convinced that the Southerner had never gotten over his resentment that the Negro was no longer his playing thing, his servant, and his source of income. The federal laws for Negro protection passed during Reconstruction had been made a mockery by the white South where it had not secured their repeal. This same white South had secured political control of its several states, and as soon as white southerners came into power they began to make playthings of Negro lives and property. This still seemed not enough "to keep the nigger down."

Here came lynch law to stifle Negro manhood which defended itself, and the burning alive of Negroes who were weak enough to accept favors from white women. The many unspeakable and unprintable tortures to which Negro rapists (?) of white women were subjected were for the purpose of striking terror into the hearts of other Negroes who might be thinking of consorting with willing white women.

I found that in order to justify these horrible atrocities to the world, the Negro was branded as a race of rapists, who were especially after white women.

Gunner Jesse Blake, Narrative of Wilmington, NC, “rebellion” of 1898 (1936)

This Rebellion was the very beginning of Negro disfranchisement in the South and an important step in the establishment of ‘White Supremacy’ in the Southland. . . . “The Rebellion was an organized resistance,” Mr. Blake said, “on the part of the white citizens of this community to the established government, which had long irked them because it was dominated by ‘Carpet Baggers’ and Negroes, and also because the better element here wished to establish ‘White Supremacy’ in the city, the state and throughout the South, and thereby remove the then stupid and ignorant Negroes from their numerically dominating position in the government.

“The older generation of Southern born men were at their wits’ end. They had passed through the rigors of the North-South war and through the tyrannies of Reconstruction when Confiscation . . . of properties without due process of law, was the rule rather than the exception. They had seen ‘Forty Acres and a Mule’ buy many a Negro’s vote.

“Black rapists were attacking Southern girls and women, those pure and lovely creatures who graced the homes in Dixie Land, and the brutes were committing this dastardly crime with more frequency while the majority of them were escaping punishment through the influence of the powers that be.

“These old Southern gentlemen had calculated that time and time only would remove the terrors of Reconstruction, a condition that was imposed upon the conquered Southerners by the victorious Northerners, but they were not willing to sit supinely by and see their girls and women assaulted by beastly brutes.

“The better element among the Northerners in the North could not want them and their little friends to grow up amid such conditions. . . .

“During the latter part of October [1898] there appeared in the columns of [the Wilmington (Negro) Daily Record] an editorial, written by the Negro editor, Alex Manly, which aroused a state-wide revulsion to the city and state administrations then in the hands of the Republicans and
Fusionists [Populists]. The editorial attempted to justify the Negro rape fiends at the expense of the virtue of Southern womanhood.”

Mr. Blake ... read the following ... editorial from [t]he Wilmington Record:

Poor whites are careless in the matter of protecting their women, especially on the farm. They are careless of their conduct towards them, and our experience among the poor white people in the county teaches us that women of that race are not more particular in the matter of clandestine meetings with colored men, than are the white man and colored women. Meetings of this kind go on for some time until the woman's infatuation, or the man's boldness, bring attention to them, and the man is lynched for rape. Every Negro lynched is called a “big, burly, black brute,” when in fact, many of those who have been thus dealt with had white men for their fathers, and were not only not “black” and “burly,” but were sufficiently attractive for white girls of culture and refinement to fall in love with them, as is very well known to all.

“That editorial,” Mr. Blake declared ... “is the straw that broke Mister Nigger’s political back in the Southland.” ...

“Excitement reigned supreme on election day and the day following,” Mr. Blake said, adding that “the tension between the races was at the breaking point, as two Pinkerton detectives, Negroes, had reported to their white employers that the Negro women, servants in the homes of white citizens, had agreed to set fire to the dwellings of their employers, and the Negro men had openly threatened to ‘burn the town down’ if the ‘White Supremacy’ issue was carried in the political contest. The very atmosphere was surcharged with tinder, and only a spark, a misstep by individuals of either race, was needed to set the whites and the blacks at each other’s throats...

“A thousand or more white citizens, representative of all walks of life ... attended the mass meeting in the New Hanover county court house the next morning, November 10, at 11 o’clock.

“Colonel Alfred Moore Waddell, a mild mannered Southern gentleman, noted for his extremely conservative tendencies, was called upon to preside over the gathering. In addressing this meeting, Colonel Waddell said: ... ‘We will not live under these intolerable conditions. No society can stand it. We intend to change it, if we have to choke the current of Cape Fear River with (Negro) carcasses!’ ”

“That declaration,” Mr. Blake said, “brought forth tremendous applause from the large gathering of white men at the mass meeting. Colonel Waddell ... announced that he heartily approved the set of resolutions which had been prepared by Mr. Hugh MacRae and which included the latter’s ‘Declaration of White Independence.’”

“These resolutions were unanimously approved by the meeting, followed by a wonderful demonstration, the assemblage rising to its feet and cheering: ‘Right! Right! Right!’ and there were cries of ‘Fumigate’ the city with ‘The Record’ and ‘Lynch Manly.’ ”

“Armed with a Winchester rifle, Colonel Waddell ordered the citizens to form in front of the Armory for an orderly procession out to ‘The Record’ plant...‘The printing press of ‘The Record’ was wrecked by the maddened white men, who also destroyed other equipment, and the type that had been used in producing the editorial that had reflected upon the virtue and character of Southern womanhood was scattered to the four winds by these men, who stood four-square for the virtue of their women and for the supremacy of the white race over the African....

“Then the ‘Red Shirts’ began to ride and the Negroes began to run. ... The Africans, or at least those Negroes who had foolishly believed in the remote possibility of social equality with the former masters of their parents, began to slink before the Caucasians. They, the Negroes, appeared to turn primal, slinking away like tigers at bay, snarling as they retreated before the bristling bayonets, barking guns and flaming ‘Red Shirts.’ ...

“African continued to cringe before Caucasian as the troops paraded the streets, as the guns barked and the bayonets flared, for a new municipal administration of the ‘White Supremacy’ persuasion had been established in a day! The old order of Negro domination over the white citizenry had ended.”
Josiah Strong, *Our Country: Its Possible Future and Its Present Crisis* (1885)

Again, nothing more manifestly distinguishes the Anglo-Saxon than his intense and persistent energy; and he is developing in the United States an energy which, in eager activity and effectiveness, is peculiarly American. This is due partly to the fact that Americans are much better fed than Europeans, and partly to the undeveloped resources of a new country, but more largely to our climate, which acts as a constant stimulus… Every one is free to become whatever he can make of himself; free to transform himself from a rail-splitter or a tanner or a canal-boy, into the nation's President. Our aristocracy, unlike that of Europe, is open to all comers. Wealth, position, influence, are prizes offered for energy; and every farmer's boy, every apprentice and clerk, every friendless and penniless immigrant, is free to enter the lists. Thus many causes co-operate to produce here the most forceful and tremendous energy in the world…

It seems to me that God, with infinite wisdom and skill, is training the Anglo-Saxon race for an hour sure to come in the world's future. Heretofore there has always been in the history of the world a comparatively unoccupied land westward, into which the crowded countries of the East have poured their surplus populations. But the widening waves of migration, which millenniums ago rolled east and west from the valley of the Euphrates, meet to-day on our Pacific coast. There are no more new worlds. The unoccupied arable lands of the earth are limited, and will soon be taken. The time is coming when the pressure of population on the means of subsistence will be felt here as it is now felt in Europe and Asia. Then will the world enter upon a new stage of its history--the, final competition of races, for which the Anglo-Saxon is being schooled.

Long before the thousand millions are here, the mighty centrifugal tendency, inherent in this stock and strengthened in the United States, will assert itself. Then this race of unequaled energy, with all the majesty of numbers and the might of wealth behind it--the representative, let us hope, of the largest liberty, the purest Christianity, the highest civilization--having developed peculiarly aggressive traits calculated to impress its institutions upon mankind, will spread itself over the earth. If I read not amiss, this powerful race will move down upon Mexico, down upon Central and South America, out upon the islands of the sea, over upon Africa and beyond. And can any one doubt that the result of this competition of races will be the "survival of the fittest"? ... Nothing can save the inferior race but a ready and pliant assimilation. Whether the feebler and more abject races are going to be regenerated and raised up, is already very much of a question. What if it should be God's plan to people the world with better and finer material? Certain it is, whatever expectations we may indulge, that there is a tremendous overbearing surge of power in the Christian nations, which, if the others are not speedily raised to some vastly higher capacity, will inevitably submerge and bury them forever. These great populations of Christendom--what are they doing, but throwing out their colonies on every side, and populating themselves, if I may so speak, into the possession of all countries and climes?* To this result no war of extermination is needful; the contest is not one of arms, but of vitality and of civilization. ...

Some of the stronger races, doubtless, may be able to preserve their integrity; but, in order to compete with the Anglo-Saxon, they will probably be forced to adopt his methods and instruments, his civilization and his religion. … The contact of Christian with heathen nations is awaking the latter to new life. Old superstitions are loosening their grasp. The dead crust of fossil faiths is being shattered by the movements of life underneath. In Catholic countries, Catholicism is losing its influence over educated minds, and in some cases the masses have already lost all faith in it. Thus, while on this continent God is training the Anglo-Saxon race for its mission, a complemental work has been in progress in the great world beyond.
Emilio Aguinaldo, “Aguinaldo’s Case against the United States (1899)

We Filipinos have all along believed that if the American nation at large knew exactly, as we do, what is daily happening in the Philippine Islands, they would rise en masse, and demand that this barbaric war should stop. There are other methods of securing sovereignty—the true and lasting sovereignty that has its foundation in the hearts of the people. . . . And, did America recognize this fact, she would cease to be the laughing stock of other civilized nations, as she became when she abandoned her traditions and set up a double standard of government—government by consent in America, government by force in the Philippine Islands. . . .

You have been deceived all along the line. You have been greatly deceived in the personality of my countrymen. You went to the Philippines under the impression that their inhabitants were ignorant savages, whom Spain had kept in subjection at the bayonet’s point. . . . We have been represented by your popular press as if we were Africans or Mohawk Indians…

In the struggle for liberty which we have ever waged, the education of the masses has been slow; but we are not, on that account, an uneducated people. . . . It is the fittest and the best of our race who have survived the vile oppression of the Spanish Government, on the one hand, and of their priests on the other; and, had it not been for their tyrannous “sovereignty” and their execrable colonial methods, we would have been, ere this time, a power in the East, as our neighbors, the Japanese, have become by their industry and their modern educational methods.

You repeat constantly the dictum that we cannot govern ourselves. . . . With equal reason, you might have said the same thing some fifty or sixty years ago of Japan; and, little over a hundred years ago, it was extremely questionable, when you, also, were rebels against the English Government, if you could govern yourselves. You obtained the opportunity, thanks to political combinations and generous assistance at the critical moment. You passed with credit through the trying period when you had to make a beginning of governing yourselves, and you eventually succeeded in establishing a government on a republican basis, which, theoretically, is as good a system of government as needs be, as it fulfils the just ideals and aspirations of the human race. Now, the moral of all this obviously is: Give us the chance; treat us exactly as you demanded to be treated at the hands of England, when you rebelled against her autocratic methods. . . .

Now, here is an unique spectacle—the Filipinos fighting for liberty, the American people fighting them to give them liberty. The two peoples are fighting on parallel lines for the same object. We know that parallel lines never meet. Let us look back to discover the point at which the lines separated and the causes of the separation, so that we may estimate the possibility of one or the other or both being turned inwards so that they shall meet again.

You declared war with Spain for the sake of Humanity . . .[Y]our object and ours was a common one. We were your accepted allies; we assisted you at all points. We besieged Manila, and we prevented the Spaniards from leaving the fortified town. We captured all the provinces of Luzon. We received arms from you. Our chiefs were in constant touch with your naval authorities...We hailed you as the long-prayed-for Messiah.

Joy abounded in every heart, and all went well . . . until . . . the Government at Washington . . . commenc[ed] by ignoring all promises that had been made and end[ed] by ignoring the Philippine people, their personality and rights, and treating them as a common enemy.

Never has a greater mistake been made in the entire history of the nations. Here you had a people who placed themselves at your feet, who welcomed you as their savior, who wished you to govern them and protect them. In combination with the genius of our countrymen and their local knowledge, you would have transformed the Philippine Islands from a land of despotism, of vicious governmental methods and priestcraft, into an enlightened republic, with America as its guide—a happy and contented people—and that in the short space of a few months, without the sacrifice of a single American life...

You took a wrong step, and you had not sufficient moral courage to retrace it. You must begin by conquering the hearts of the Philippine people. Be absolutely just, and you can lead them with a silken cord where chains of steel will not drag them. . . . But this question of sovereignty—why, such a transparent farce has never before been flouted before an intelligent people and the world in general. Can you wonder our people mistrust . . . ? They do not even regard you as being serious—a nation which professes to derive its just power of government from the consent of the governed.
American Anti-Imperialist League Platform, 1899.

We hold that the policy known as imperialism is hostile to liberty and tends toward militarism, an evil from which it has been our glory to be free. We regret that it has become necessary in the land of Washington and Lincoln to reaffirm that all men, of whatever race or color, are entitled to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. We maintain that governments derive their just powers from the consent of the governed. We insist that the subjugation of any people is "criminal aggression" and open disloyalty to the distinctive principles of our government.

The United States have always protested against the doctrine of international law which permits the subjugation of the weak by the strong. A self-governing state cannot accept sovereignty over an unwilling people. The United States cannot act upon the ancient heresy that might makes right.

Imperialists assume that with the destruction of self-government in the Philippines by American hands, all opposition here will cease. This is a grievous error. Much as we abhor the war of "criminal aggression" in the Philippines, greatly as we regret that the blood of the Filipinos is on American hands, we more deeply resent the betrayal of American institutions at home. The real firing line is not in the suburbs of Manila. The foe is of our own household. The attempt of 1861 was to divide the country. That of 1899 is to destroy its fundamental principles and noblest ideals.


[In this campaign, the question is larger than a party question. It is an American question. It is a world question. Shall the American people continue their march toward the commercial supremacy of the world? Shall free institutions broaden their blessed reign as the children of liberty wax in strength, until the empire of our principles is established over the hearts of all mankind?

Hawaii is ours; Porto Rico is to be ours; at the prayer of her people Cuba finally will be ours; in the islands of the East, even to the gates of Asia, coaling stations are to be ours at the very least; the flag of a liberal government is to float over the Philippines, and may it be the banner that Taylor unfurled in Texas and Fremont carried to the coast.

The Opposition tells us that we ought not to govern a people without their consent. I answer, The rule of liberty that all just government derives its authority from the consent of the governed, applies only to those who are capable of self-government. We govern the Indians without their consent, we govern our territories without their consent, we govern our children without their consent. How do they know what our government would be without their consent? Would not the people of the Philippines prefer the just, humane, civilizing government of this Republic to the savage, bloody rule of pillage and extortion from which we have rescued them?...

But the Opposition is right- there is a difference. We did not need the western Mississippi Valley when we acquired it, nor Florida! nor Texas, nor California, nor the royal provinces of the far northwest. We had no emigrants to people this imperial wilderness, no money to develop it, even no highways to cover it. No trade awaited us in its savage fastnesses. Our productions were not greater than our trade. There was not one reason for the land-lust of our statesmen from Jefferson to Grant, other than the prophet and the Saxon within them. But, to-day, we are raising more than we can consume, making more than we can use. Therefore we must find new markets for our produce...Within five decades the bulk of Oriental commerce will be ours.

If the Philippines are annexed, what is to prevent the Chinese, the Negritos and the Malays coming to our country? How can we prevent the Chinese coolies from going to the Philippines and from there swarm into the United States and engulf our people and our civilization. If these new islands are to become ours, it will be either under the form of Territories or States. Can we hope to close the flood-gates of immigration from the hordes of Chinese and the semi-savage races coming from what will then be part of our own country? …

If we attempt to force upon the natives of the Philippines our rule, and compel them to conform to our more or less rigid mold of government, how many lives shall we take? Of course, they will seem cheap, because they are poor laborers. They will be members of the majority in the Philippines, but they will be ruled and killed at the convenience of the very small minority there, backed up by our armed land and sea forces. The dominant class in the islands will ease its conscience because the victims will be poor, ignorant and weak. When innocent men can be shot down on the public highway as they were in Lattimer, Pa., and Virden, Ill., men of our own flesh and blood, men who help to make this homogenous nation great, because they dare ask for humane conditions at the hands of the moneyed class of our country, how much more difficult will it be to arouse any sympathy, and secure relief for the poor semi-savages in the Philippines, much less indignation at any crime against their inherent and natural rights to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness?
Rev. George R. Stuart, *The Stump Digger: A Sermon on Temperance*, Atlanta, Georgia (1896)

Woe unto him that giveth his neighbor drink, that putteth thy bottle to him, and makest him drunken also...And today God Almighty's truth is verified upon us, and woe and sorrow are upon us. If I should name the things that are most hurtful to American peace, happiness, and prosperity, and trace them back to their legitimate sources, I would locate them in the liquor barrels and beer-kegs of America.

What are the troubles that threaten us today? Says one, the spirit of anarchy, now so prominently mentioned in the press of our nation. Only a short time ago, this spirit was so dominant in the city of Chicago that three hundred armed policemen were called upon to dispel the meetings of anarchists, and every time they were found assembled in the upper rooms of the saloon. And that spirit is born in the saloon. Another great trouble in our country is our strikes and mobs, and when they become uncontrollable in any city the first thing the mayor does is to order every saloon closed. He goes to the fountain from which the mob springs, and the only hope for life and safety is to stop the fountain. Again, we look today in the face of the most heinous and wicked corruption in our political life, and every man knows that the infernal liquor business is back of all the political corruption, corrupting our officials and subsidizing our American ballot...

Again, a wail of woe, sad and pathetic, comes up from the poverty-stricken common people of our country. Never, since the time when that little vessel landed on the American shores, has there been such poverty and distress among the common people of our country. Ninety per cent of this poverty is traceable to the liquor traffic.

Again, a wail of woe comes up from the widowhood and orphanage of our land. These widows and orphans are the legitimate work of the barroom, to say nothing of the husbands and fathers murdered and ruined by the liquor traffic. Ninety per cent of the divorces of America are traceable to the saloon. It is unnecessary to recount the sorrow, woe, poverty, beggary, misery, distress, and bloodshed that have been the topics of the temperance speeches for the past century. It is needless to answer the question; "Who hath sorrow? who hath woe? who hath redness of eyes?" Surely we look today upon the awful fulfillment of the words of God Almighty in my text. Woe unto the nation that buildeth her towns with blood, and that giveth her neighbor drink. The American people have never looked upon such a period in her history. Nothing but this monumental crime and the curse of God Almighty could bring us into such a condition, amid our fertile fields and waving harvests...

I hold in my hand a silver dollar. That you may see clearly what I mean, I will spend this money before your eyes. I drop it on this table, and call it a saloon counter. That dollar buys a quart of liquor...I drink the quart of liquor and start home to the drunkard's cottage. My wife, Sallie, meets me at the door, surrounded by her hungry, wretched children, and says: "John, what did you bring home?" "I brought you a quart." Now if the ladies in the audience will pardon me, I wish to ask what the quart of liquor in the poor drunkard's stomach is worth. (Great applause.) I say that the dollar is burned up at the home end; not only is the liquor worth nothing to the poor old drunkard's home, but it burns up his body, burns up his mind, burns up his soul, destroys the happiness of his wife and children, ruins his business or trade, disqualifies him for making another dollar, hurts the community, hurts everything. Do you see where the saloon dollar goes?

The drunkards' wives and children of this country need the necessities and comforts which are burned up in the saloon every year. The comforts lie on the counters of the stores and the groceries; their bread lies rotting in the great warehouses of this country, while the twelve hundred million dollars that ought to command these comforts pour down into the saloon hole and the drunkards' families cry for bread. (Applause.)
In considering the subject “Ethical Substitutes for the Saloon,” . . . [w]e must try to ascertain the secret of its hold upon our civilization. . . .

The popular conception of the saloon as a “place where men and women revel in drunkenness and shame,” or “where the sotted beasts gather nightly at the bar,” is due to exaggerated pictures, drawn by temperance lecturers and evangelists, intended to excite the imagination with a view to arousing public sentiment. I am not charging them with intended falsehood, but with placing in combination things which never so exist in real life; with blending into one picture hideous incidents taken here and there from the lives of those whom the saloon has wrecked; with portraying vividly the dark side of saloon life and calling this picture “the saloon.” . . .

[The saloon] is a part of the neighborhood, which must change with the neighborhood; it fulfills in it the social functions which unfortunately have been left to it to exercise. With keen insight into human nature and into the wants of the people, it anticipates all other agencies in supplying them, and thus claims its right to existence. In some sections of the city it has the appearance of accomplishing more for the laboring classes from business interests than we from philanthropic motives . . .

When the poor, underpaid, and unskilled laborer returns from his day’s work, go with him, if you will, into the room or rooms he calls “home.” Eat with him there, in the midst of those squalid surroundings and to the music of crying children, a scanty, poorly cooked meal served by an unkempt wife. Ask yourself if this is just the place where he would want to spend his evenings, night after night. . . . Is there no escape from the inevitable despair that must come to him whose long hours of heavy physical labor preclude any mental enjoyment, if his few leisure hours are to be spent in the wretched surroundings of a home, or, worse yet, of the ordinary cheap lodging-house, either of which must constantly remind him of his poverty? Are there not places in the neighborhood where the surroundings will be more congenial; where his mental, yes, his moral, nature will have a better chance for development? Are there not some in the neighborhood who have recognized and sought to satisfy the social cravings of these men, which the home at best does not wholly satisfy?

Yes, business interests have occupied this field. With a shrewd foresight, partially due to the fierce competition between the great brewing companies, they have seen and met these needs.

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<th>Number of saloons</th>
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<td>Number offering free lunches</td>
<td>111</td>
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<td>“ ” business lunches</td>
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In the statement, now current among those who have studied the saloon “at first hand,” that it is the workingman’s club, lies the secret of its hold upon the vast working and voting populace of Chicago . . . As you step in, you find a few men standing at the bar, a few drinking, and farther back men are seated about the tables, reading, playing cards, eating, and discussing, over a glass of beer, subjects varying from the political and sociological problems of the day to the sporting news and the lighter chat of the immediate neighborhood. Untrammeled by rules and restrictions, it surpasses in spirit the organized club. That general atmosphere of freedom, that spirit of democracy, which men crave, is here realized; that men seek it and that the saloon tries to cultivate it is blazoned forth in such titles as “The Freedom,” “The Social,” “The Club,” etc. Here men “shake out their hearts together.” . . .

In many of these discussions, to which I have listened and in which I have joined, there has been revealed a deeper insight into the real cause of present evils than is often manifested from lecture platforms, but their remedies are wide of the mark, each bringing forward a theory which is the panacea for all social ills. The names of Karl Marx and leaders of political and social thought are often heard here. This is the workingman’s school. He is both scholar and teacher. The problems of national welfare are solved here. Many as patriotic men as our country produces learn here their lessons in patriotism and brotherhood. Here the masses receive their lessons in civil government, learning less of our ideals, but more of the practical workings than the public schools teach. It is the most cosmopolitan institution in the most cosmopolitan of cities. One saloon advertises its cosmopolitanism by this title, “Everybody’s Exchange.” Men of all nationalities meet and mingle, and by the interchange of views and opinions their own are modified. Nothing short of travel could exert so broadening an influence upon these men. It does much to assimilate the heterogeneous crowds that are constantly pouring into our city from foreign shores. But here, too, they learn their lessons in
corruption and vice. It is their school for good and evil...The saloon is, in short, the clearing-house for the common intelligence—the social and intellectual center of the neighborhood...

For the large floating population of these districts, and for the thousands of men whose only home is in the street or the cheap lodging-house, where they are herded together like cattle, the saloon is practically the basis of food supply. [Our study shows that] 68 per cent. furnish free lunches, and 15 per cent. business lunches. On the free-lunch counters are dishes containing bread, several kinds of meats, vegetables, cheeses, etc., to which the men freely help themselves. Red-hots [frankfurters], clams, and egg sandwiches are dispensed with equal freedom to those who drink and to those who do not...

That the saloons are able to put out such an abundance, and of such variety and quality, is due to the competition of the large brewing companies. These companies own a very large number of the saloons in Chicago. Thus the cost of not only the beer, but the meat, bread, and vegetables, bought in vast quantities, is greatly reduced. Only a portion of those who drink patronize the lunch counter. . . . I believe it is true that all the charity organizations in Chicago combined are feeding fewer people than the saloons. No questions are asked about the “deserving poor;” no “work test” is applied; and again and again relief is given in the shape of money, “loaned expecting no return.”

Another function of the Charity Organization Society the saloon has taken unto itself and exercises more or less perfectly: the laboring man out of employment knows that in some saloon he is likely to find, not only temporary relief, but assistance in finding work. That these saloons pose as labor bureaus is evidenced by the names placed above their doors. The significance of these names is this: Men of the same trade, having common interests, make the saloon that represents their interests their rendezvous. To the “Stonecutters’ Exchange,” for example, men seeking stoncutters often apply. But information concerning positions is dependent more upon that gathered by the men themselves and made common property. Many a man has been “put on his feet” by just this kind of help, nor does he feel that he is accepting charity, but that he is as likely to give as to receive. He is asked neither his age nor his pedigree. His past history is not desired as long as he is in need now. . . . Grateful is he to the saloon that was his “friend in need;” bitter toward those who, without offering anything better, propose to take from him the only institution that has befriended him.

Scattered throughout the city, within easy reach of any neighborhood, are saloons offering a form of entertainment to the people not unlike the cheap vaudeville. Passing back of the screen, we enter a large room filled with tables and chairs; at the end of the room is a stage. While men and women sit around these tables, drinking beer and smoking, the painted, bawdy girls entertain them with the latest popular songs and the skirt dance. The regular vaudeville bill, including the comic man, acrobatic feats, cake-walks, etc., is presented. The character of the entertainment is but a reflection of the character of the neighborhood. In some communities no obscene word is uttered, and but little that is suggestive of evil is presented. It affords an opportunity for the hard-worked men and women to escape from their stuffy homes and thoughts of poverty into a clean, well-lighted room, where with their families they can enjoy an evening of pleasure. . . . Patriotic songs are never missing, and I have heard them join heartily in the chorus. Cheer after cheer greets the names of our heroes, as they appear in the songs of the girls. The sense of the masses on the Cuban war policy could easily be determined by their applause and hisses at the saloon vaudevilles. . . . Then too prostitutes often come here and mingle with the crowd. . . .

While it is true that a vast army of the laboring men and boys of Chicago find the saloon the best place in their neighborhood for the development of their social, intellectual, and physical natures, they find there also things which appeal to their lower natures. . . .

Where is the respectable young woman, who is but one member of a large family, all living, or rather existing, in a single room which serves as kitchen, dining-room, parlor, and bedroom for the entire family, to receive her young men friends? Is it strange that she takes advantage of these [saloons]? Here her father goes; her mother and brothers are often there. They come here on cold nights to save fuel and light. Here, when a little tot, she used to come for the pitcher of beer; here, barefooted and dirty, she would run to hear the music of the German band; if she were pretty and could sing, many a bright ribbon did she buy with the money earned here. No, they are not all directly evil places, but the temptation is tremendous. How can a child, brought up in such a locality, forced to receive from the saloon even the common necessities and conveniences of life, grow up into noble and beautiful womanhood?

**Frowne worked in a sweatshop in Brooklyn, New York.**

There are two Sabbaths here—our own Sabbath, that comes on a Saturday, and the Christian Sabbath that comes on Sunday. It is against our law to work on our own Sabbath, so we work on their Sabbath...

I get up at half-past five o'clock every morning and make myself a cup of coffee on the oil stove. I eat a bit of bread and perhaps some fruit and then go to work. Often I get there soon after six o'clock so as to be in good time, tho the factory does not open till seven. I have heard that there is a sort of clock that calls you at the very time you want to get up, but I can't believe that because I don't see how the clock would know.

At seven o'clock we all sit down to our machines and the boss brings to each one the pile of work that he or she is to finish during the day, what they call in English their "stint." This pile is put down beside the machine and as soon as a skirt is done it is laid on the other side of the machine. Sometimes the work is not all finished by six o'clock and then the one who is behind must work overtime. Sometimes one is finished ahead of time and gets away at four or five o'clock, but generally we are not done till six o'clock.

The machines go like mad all day because the faster you work the more money you get. Sometimes in my haste I get my finger caught and the needle goes right through it. It goes so quick, tho, that it does not hurt much. I bind the finger up with a piece of cotton and go on working. We all have accidents like that. Where the needle goes through the nail it makes a sore finger, or where it splinters a bone it does much harm. Sometimes a finger has to come off. Generally, tho, one can be cured by a salve.

All the time we are working the boss walks around examining the finished garments and making us do them over again if they are not just right. So we have to be careful as well as swift. But I am getting so good at the work that within a year I will be making $7 a week, and then I can save at least $4.50 a week. I have over $200 saved now.

The machines are all run by foot power, and at the end of the day one feels so weak that there is a great temptation to lie right down and sleep. But you must go out and get air, and have some pleasure. So instead of lying down I go out, generally with Henry. Sometimes we go to Coney Island, where there are good dancing places, and sometimes we go to Ulmer Park to picnics. I am very fond of dancing, and; in fact, all sorts of pleasure. I go to the theater quite often, and like those plays that make you cry a great deal. "The Two Orphans" is good. Last time I saw it I cried all night because of the hard times that the children had in the play.

We have just finished a strike in our business. It spread all over and the United Brotherhood of Garment Workers was in it. That takes in the cloakmakers, coatmakers, and all the others. We struck for shorter hours, and after being out four weeks won the fight. We only have to work nine and a half hours a day and we get the same pay as before. So the union does good after all in spite of what some people say against it—that it just takes our money and does nothing.

I pay 25 cents a month to the union, but I do not begrudge that because it is for our benefit. The next strike is going to be for a raise of wages, which we all ought to have. But tho I belong to the Union I am not a Socialist or an Anarchist. I don't know exactly what those things mean. There is a little expense for charity, too. If any worker is injured or sick we all give money to help.

Some of the women blame me very much because I spend so much money on clothes. They say that instead of $1 a week I ought not to spend more than 25 cents a week on clothes, and that I should save the rest. But a girl must have clothes if she is to go into high society at Ulmer Park or Coney Island or the theatre. Those who blame me are the old country people who have old-fashioned notions, but the people who have been here a long time know better. A girl who does not dress well is stuck in a corner, even if she is pretty and Aunt Fanny says that I do just right to put on plenty of style.

I have many friends and we often have jolly parties. Many of the young men like to talk to me, but I don't go out with any except Henry. Lately he has been urging me more and more to get married--but I think I'll wait.

This document describes Cohen's experiences in a sweatshop in New York City's Lower East Side in the 1890s.

We arose earlier than usual that morning for father had to take me to the shop and not be over late for his own work. I wrapped my thimble and scissors, with a piece of bread for breakfast, in a bit of newspaper, carefully stuck two needles into the lapel of my coat and we started.

The shop was on Pelem Street, a shop district one block long and just wide enough for two ordinary sized wagons to pass each other. We stopped at a door where I noticed at once a brown shining porcelain knob and a half rubbed off number seven. Father looked at his watch and at me.

"Don't look so frightened," he said. "You need not go in until seven. Perhaps if you start in at this hour he will think you have been in the habit of beginning at seven and will not expect you to come in earlier. Remember, be independent. At seven o'clock rise and go home no matter whether the others go or stay."

He began to tell me something else but broke off suddenly, said "good-by" over his shoulder and went away quickly. Now only I felt frightened, and waiting made me nervous, so I tried the knob. The door yielded heavily and closed slowly. I was half way up when it closed entirely, leaving me in darkness. I groped my way to the top of the stairs and hearing a clattering noise of machines, I felt about, found a door, and pushed it open and went in. A tall, beardless man stood folding coats at a table. I went over and asked him for the name (I don't remember what it was.) "Yes," he said crossly. "What do you want?"

I said, "I am the new feller hand." He looked at me from head to foot. My face felt so burning hot that I could scarcely see.

"It is more likely," he said, "that you can pull bastings than fell sleeve lining." Then turning from me he shouted over the noise of the machine: "Presser, is this the girl?" The presser put down the iron and looked at me. "I suppose so," he said, "I only know the father." The cross man looked at me again and said, "Let's see what you can do." He kicked a chair, from which the back had been broken off, to the finisher's table, threw a coat upon it and said, raising the corner of his mouth: "Make room for the new feller hand."

One girl tittered, two men glanced at me over their shoulders and pushed their chairs apart a little. By this time I scarcely knew what I was about. I laid my coat down somewhere and pushed my bread into the sleeve. Then I stumbled into the bit of space made for me at the table, drew in the chair and sat down. The men were so close to me at each side I felt the heat of their bodies and could not prevent myself from shrinking away. The men noticed and probably felt hurt. One made a joke, the other laughed and the girls bent their heads low over their work. All at once the thought came: "If I don't do this coat quickly and well he will send me away at once." I picked up the coat, threaded my needle, and began hastily, repeating the lesson father impressed upon me. "Be careful not to twist the sleeve lining, take small false stitches."

My hands trembled so that I could not hold the needle properly. It took me a long while to do the coat. But at last it was done. I took it over to the boss and stood at the table waiting while he was examining it. He took long, trying every stitch with his needle. Finally he put it down and without looking at me gave me two other coats. I felt very happy! When I sat down at the table I drew my knees close together and stitched as quickly as I could.

When the pedlar (sic) came into the shop everybody bought rolls. I felt hungry but I was ashamed and would not eat the plain, heavy rye bread while the others ate rolls.
All day I took my finished work and laid it on the boss's table. He
would glance at the clock and give me other work. Before the day
was over I knew that this was a "piece work shop," that there were
four machines and sixteen people were working. I also knew that I
had done almost as much work as "the grown-up girls" and that
they did not like me. I heard Betsy, the head feller hand, talking
about "a snip of a girl coming and taking the very bread out of
your mouth." The only one who could have been my friend was the
presser who knew my father. But him I did not like. The worst I
knew about him just now was that he was a soldier because the
men called him so. But a soldier, I had learned, was capable of
anything. And so, noticing that he looked at me often, I studiously
kept my eyes from his corner of the room.

Seven o'clock came and everyone worked on. I wanted to rise as
father had told me to do and go home. But I had not the courage to
stand up alone. I kept putting off going from minute to minute. My
neck felt stiff and my back ached. I wished there were a back to
my chair so that I could rest against it a little. When the people
began to go home it seemed to me that it had been night a long
time.

The next morning when I came into the shop at seven o'clock, I
saw at once that all the people were there and working steadily as
if they had been at work a long while. I had just time to put away
my coat and go over to the table, when the boss shouted gruffly,
"Look here, girl, if you want to work here you better come in early.
No office hours in my shop." It seemed very still in the room, even
the machines stopped. And his voice sounded dreadfully distinct. I
hastened into the bit of space between the two men and sat down.
He brought me two coats and snapped, "Hurry with these!"

From this hour a hard life began for me. He refused to employ me
except by the week. He paid me three dollars and for this he
hurried me from early until late. He gave me only two coats at a
time to do. When I took them over and as he handed me the new
work he would say quickly and sharply, "Hurry!" And when he did
not say it in words he looked at me and I seemed to hear even more
plainly, "Hurry!" I hurried but he was never satisfied. By looks and
manner he made me feel that I was not doing enough Late at night
when the people would stand up and begin to fold their work away
and I too would rise, feeling stiff in every limb and thinking with
dread of our cold empty little room and the uncooked rice, he
would come over with still another coat.

"I need it the first thing in the morning," he would give as an
excuse. I understood that he was taking advantage of me because I
was a child. And now that it was dark in the shop except for the
low single gas jet over my table and the one over his at the other
end of the room, and there was no one to see, more tears fell on
the sleeve lining as I bent over it than there were stitches in it.

I did not soon complain to father. I had given him an idea of the
people and the work during the first days. But when I had been in
the shop a few weeks I told him, "The boss is hurrying the life out
of me." I know now that if I had put it less strongly he would have
paid more attention to it. Father hated to hear things put strongly.
Besides he himself worked very hard. He never came home before
eleven and he left at five in the morning.

He said to me now, "Work a little longer until you have more
experience; then you can be independent."

"But if I did piece work, father, I would not have to hurry so. And I
could go home earlier when the other people go."

Father explained further, "It pays him better to employ you by the
week. Don't you see if you did piece work he would have to pay
you as much as he pays a woman piece worker? But this way he
gets almost as much work out of you for half the amount a woman
is paid."
The Consumers' League of Brooklyn was organized four years ago with Mrs. Ruth Huntington Sessions as president, and did quietly persistent work in furthering the objects of the league . . . to secure the best possible conditions in the stores of Brooklyn . . . In the large department stores the conditions that prevail are better than those in any other line of business in which women are engaged and the league now proposes . . . to turn its attention to the product of the sweat shop and to protect its members from the purchase of sweat shop goods.

In order to do this, it has decided to accept the guarantee of any firm name after the place of manufacture has been visited by a paid inspector employed by the league. The Consumers' League label and the Labor Union label are recognized standards, but, as both of these are limited in the possibilities of use, the Brooklyn League has decided that, until the “moral sentiment of the manufacturer equals the apprehension of the consumer,” every method of protection must be tried.

It is also the purpose of the league to compel the enforcement of law whenever the violation in the manufacture of garments is discovered. The present labor laws regulate the making of garments in living rooms. The Consumers' League hopes to secure the passage of a law which will abolish the making of garments in living rooms . . . So long as it is possible to secure a license for the manufacture of goods in living rooms, says the Consumers' League, so long will such distribution of garments be possible. The sweat shop is responsible for bringing to this country the least desirable emigrants and it is the sweat shop that makes and keeps them the worst class of citizens. The sweat shop in a tenement makes home impossible. It is the most prolific source of child labor and it is the worst enemy of the working man. A law which will eliminate the sub-contractor will eliminate the sweat shop, and this is the ultimate aim of the Consumers' League.

The cordial co-operation of the leading merchants in the effort to abolish the sweat shop is an assurance, the league believes, that the day is not far distant when the sweat shop will have disappeared from the economic world in this country.

A man's natural rights are as many and as extensive as are the liberties, opportunities and possessions that are required for the reasonable maintenance and development of his personality. They may all be reduced to the right to a reasonable amount of external liberty of action. Some of them, for instance, the right to live and the right to marry, are original and primary, inhering in all persons of whatever condition; others are derived and secondary, occasioned and determined by the particular circumstances of particular persons. To the latter class belongs the right to a Living Wage. It is not an original and universal right; for the receiving of wages supposes that form of industrial organization known as the wage system, which has not always existed and is not essential to human welfare.

Private property is morally legitimate because it is the method that best enables man to realize his natural right to use the gifts of material nature for the development of his personality. It is, therefore, merely a means, and its scope is determined and limited by the end which it promotes, and which is its sole justification. The private right of any and every individual must be interpreted consistently with the common rights of all. When a private owner encroaches upon the latter he cannot justify his conduct by an appeal to the authority of his private right; for this is a mere means to the right of use, and his right of use ceases where the like right of his neighbor begins. Hence a man's right to a superfluous loaf which is his by a title of private ownership does not absolve him from the crime of injustice when he withholds it from his starving fellow man. In acting thus he treats a trifling want of his own, namely, the desire to continue in possession of that loaf, as a thing of greater worth than his neighbor's life. He uses the common bounty of nature to satisfy an unimportant want at the expense of an essential want in a being whose life is as sacred and as valuable as his own. As this use of goods is unreasonable, so is the means by which it is accomplished, namely, an undue extension and unwarranted interpretation of the right of private property.

So much for the right to subsistence, to a bare livelihood. By a *decent* livelihood is meant that amount of the necessities and comforts of life that is in keeping with the dignity of a human being. It has no necessary relation to the conventional standard of living that may prevail within any social or industrial class, but describes rather that minimum of conditions which the average person of a given age or sex must enjoy in order to live as a human being should live. It means, in short, that smallest amount of subsistence goods which is reasonable, becoming, appropriate to the dignity of a person. The obligation of providing the laborer with a Living Wage…rests upon the State….Negatively, liberty is the absence of restraint; positively, it is the power to act and enjoy….The absence of State intervention means the presence of insuperable obstacles to real and effective liberty…. [L]iving wage legislation] would secure a wider measure of freedom in larger economic opportunity…

Some of the opponents of State intervention in industry may be conveniently classed with the juvenile bully who resents the "interference" of parent or teacher in his relations with younger and weaker boys, and with the burglar or highwayman who objects to the activity of the policeman. These are the possessors of superior bargaining power who realize that if government will only let them alone they will be able successfully to exploit their weaker fellows. Their opposition is natural in the same sense that selfishness is natural…. [T]he more numerous and complicated social relations become, the greater will be the necessity for regulation, and the larger will be the practical freedom that will result from wise regulation.

As an abstract proposition, the State has both the right and the duty to compel all employers to pay a Living Wage. The function of the State is to promote the social welfare. The social welfare means in practice the welfare of all individuals over whom the State has authority; and the welfare of the individual includes all those conditions that assist in the pursuit of his earthly end, namely, the reasonable development of his personality. The primary business of the State, then, is to protect men in the enjoyment of those opportunities that are essential to right and reasonable life. They may be summed up in the phrase, natural rights. In addition to this, the State is charged with the obligation of promoting social prosperity. That is to say, its task is not merely to provide men with the opportunities that are absolutely essential to right living, but also to furnish as far as practicable the conditions of wider and fuller life. Since man's capacity for progress is indefinite, the State will fail in its mission of furthering social welfare unless it does something toward
securing to him the external conditions of something more than the minimum of reasonable personal development. State activity in the first sense is mainly protective and restrictive; in the second, auxiliary and cooperative. Now, a law requiring employers to pay a Living Wage would evidently be an instance of State activity in the primary sense, for it would be an attempt to protect natural rights, and to provide one of the essential conditions of reasonable human life. Even those who hold that the sole function of the State is to safeguard individuals against violence and injustice, in other words, to protect life and property, could logically admit that the enactment of such a law would not be an undue exercise of power. To compel a man to work for less than a Living Wage is as truly an act of injustice as to pick his pocket. In a wide sense it is also an attack upon his life. An ordinance prohibiting this species of oppression would, therefore, be a measure for the protection of life and property.

Marie Jenney Howe, An Anti-Suffrage Monologue (1913)

Note: This document is a parody, or satire. If you do not know what that means, you should look it up before reading the document, because it will affect your analysis of Howe’s text.

Woman suffrage is the reform against nature. Look at these [pro-suffrage] ladies sitting on the platform. Observe their physical inability, their mental disability, their spiritual instability and general debility! Could they walk up to the ballot box, mark a ballot, and drop it in? Obviously not. Let us grant for the sake of argument that they could mark a ballot. But could they drop it in? Ah, no. All nature is against it. The laws of man cry out against it. The voice of God cries out against it—and so do I.

Enfranchisement is what makes man man. Disenfranchisement is what makes woman woman. If women were enfranchised every man would be just like every woman and every woman would be just like every man. There would be no difference between them. And don’t you think this would rob life of just a little of its poetry and romance?

Man must remain man. Woman must remain woman. If man goes over and tries to be like woman, if woman goes over and tries to be like man, it will become so very confusing and so difficult to explain to our children.

I know you begin to see how strongly I feel on this subject, but I have some reasons as well. These reasons are based on logic. Of course, I am not logical. I am a creature of impulse, instinct, and intuition—and I glory in it. But I know that these reasons are based on logic because I have culled them from the men whom it is my privilege to know.

My first argument against suffrage is that the women would not use it if they had it. You couldn’t drive them to the polls. My second argument is, if the women were enfranchised they would neglect their homes, desert their families, and spend all their time at the polls. You may tell me that the polls are only open once a year. But I know women. They are creatures of habit. If you let them go to the polls once a year, they will hang round the polls all the rest of the time.

I have arranged these arguments in couplets. They go together in such a way that if you don’t like one you can take the other. This is my second anti-suffrage couplet. If the women were enfranchised they would vote
exactly as their husbands do and only double the existing vote. Do you like that argument? If not, take this one. If the women were enfranchised they would vote against their own husbands, thus creating dissension, family quarrels, and divorce.

My third anti-suffrage couplet is—women are angels. Many men call me an angel and I have a strong instinct which tells me it is true; that is why I am an anti, because “I want to be an angel and with the angels stand.” And if you don’t like that argument take this one. Women are depraved. They would introduce into politics a vicious element which would ruin our national life.

Fourth anti-suffrage couplet: women cannot understand politics. Therefore there would be no use in giving women political power, because they would not know what to do with it. On the other hand, if the women were enfranchised, they would mount rapidly into power, take all the offices from all the men, and soon we would have women governors of all our states and dozens of women acting as President of the United States.

Fifth anti-suffrage couplet: women cannot band together. They are incapable of organization. No two women can even be friends. Women are cats. On the other hand, if women were enfranchised, we would have all the women banded together on one side and all the men banded together on the other side, and there would follow a sex war which might end in bloody revolution.

Just one more of my little couplets: the ballot is greatly over-estimated. It has never done anything for anybody. Lots of men tell me this. And the corresponding argument is—the ballot is what gives him all his dignity and all of his superiority to women. Therefore if we allow women to share this privilege, how could a woman look up to her own husband? Why, there would be nothing to look up to.

I have talked to many woman suffragists and I find them very unreasonable. I say to them: “Here I am, convince me.” I ask for proof. Then they proceed to tell me of Australia and Colorado and other places where women have passed excellent laws to improve the condition of working women and children. But I say, “What of it?” These are facts. I don’t care about facts. I ask for proof.

Then they quote the eight million women of the United States who are now supporting themselves, and the twenty-five thousand married women in the City of New York who are self-supporting. But I say again, what of it? These are statistics. I don’t believe in statistics. Facts and statistics are things which no truly womanly woman would ever use.

I wish to prove anti-suffrage in a womanly way—that is, by personal example. This is my method of persuasion. Once I saw a woman driving a horse, and the horse ran away with her. Isn’t that just like a woman? Once I read in the newspapers about a woman whose house caught on fire, and she threw the children out of the window and carried the pillows downstairs. Does that show political acumen, or does it not? Besides, look at the hats that women wear! And have you ever known a successful woman governor of a state? Or have you ever known a really truly successful woman president of the United States? Well, if they could they would, wouldn’t they? Then, if they haven’t, doesn’t that show they couldn’t? As for the militant suffragettes, they are all hyenas in petticoats. Now do you want to be a hyena and wear petticoats?

Now, I think I have proved anti-suffrage; and I have done it in a womanly way—that is, without stooping to the use of a single fact or argument or a single statistic.
Progressive Party Platform (1912).

Political parties exist to secure responsible government and to execute the will of the people. From these great tasks both of the old parties have turned aside. Instead of instruments to promote the general welfare, they have become the tools of corrupt interests which use them impartially to serve their selfish purposes. Behind the ostensible government sits enthroned an invisible government, owing no allegiance and acknowledging no responsibility to the people.

To destroy this invisible government, to dissolve the unholy alliance between corrupt business and corrupt politics is the first task of the statesmanship of the day. The deliberate betrayal of its trust by the Republican Party, and the fatal incapacity of the Democratic Party to deal with the new issues of the new time, have compelled the people to forge a new instrument of government through which to give effect to their will in laws and institutions.

Unhampered by tradition, uncorrupted by power, undismayed by the magnitude of the task, the new party offers itself as the instrument of the people to sweep away old abuses, to build a new and nobler commonwealth…

The Progressive Party, committed to the principle of government by a self-controlled democracy expressing its will through representatives of the people, pledges itself to secure such alterations in the fundamental law of the several States and of the United States as shall insure the representative character of the Government…

Up to the limit of the Constitution, and later by amendment of the Constitution, if found necessary, we advocate bringing under effective national jurisdiction those problems which have expanded beyond reach of the individual states.

It is as grotesque as it is intolerable that the several States should by unequal laws in matter of common concern become competing commercial agencies, barter the lives of their children, the health of their women and the safety and well-being of their working people for the profit of their financial interests.

The extreme insistence on States' rights by the Democratic Party in the Baltimore platform demonstrates anew its inability to understand the world into which it has survived or to administer the affairs of a Union States which have in all essential respects become one people…

We pledge ourselves to work unceasingly in State and Nation for:--

Effective legislation looking to the prevention of industrial accidents, occupational diseases, overwork, involuntary unemployment, and other injurious effects incident to modern industry;

The fixing of minimum safety and health standards for the various occupations…The prohibition of child labor;

Minimum wage standards for working women, to provide a living scale in all industrial occupations; The prohibition of night work for women and the establishment of an eight hour day for women and young persons;

One day's rest in seven for all wage-workers…

We demand that the test of true prosperity shall be the benefits conferred thereby on all the citizens not confined to individuals or classes and that the test of corporate efficiency shall be the ability better to serve the public; that those who profit by control of business affairs shall justify that profit and that control by sharing with the public the fruits thereof.

We therefore demand a strong National regulation of inter-State corporations. The corporation is an essential part of modern business. The concentration of modern business, in some degree, is both inevitable and necessary for National and international business efficiency. but the existing concentration of vast wealth under a corporate system, unguarded and uncontrolled by the Nation, has placed in the hands of a few men enormous, secret, irresponsible power over the daily life of the citizen--a power insufferable in a free government and certain of abuse…

The Progressive Party, believing that no people can justly claim to be a true democracy which denies political rights on account of sex, pledges itself to the task of securing equal suffrage to men and women alike.

We are for war; of course, we are; and for reasons good and plenty, to wit:

(1) Because we have reached and passed the limit of forbearance in trying to maintain amicable relations with a barbaric brute [Germany] who has presumed so far upon our good intent as to treat our most conciliatory and helpful suggestions with glaring contempt, who has incited all manner of treasonable activities and damnable outrages without our borders, has gloated over his avowed assassination of our innocent and harmless citizens of both sexes and all ages upon the high seas …

(2) Because we owe it to our forefathers who founded the Republic and to our fathers who saved the Union to prove ourselves not merely worthy of the happiness which flows from prosperity but eager and fearless in support of free life and full liberty the world over, to the end that the noble example set by them may not be degraded in gluttonous realization by us. [S]imply and finally, in such a case, war is curative, not destructive; a blessing, not a curse.

(3) Because our going into the great conflict at this psychological moment would not only complete the ring of democracies around the doomed autocracy and so render the ultimate result certain to the dullest and the blindest, but from that very fact would infect all Germany, all Austria and all Hungary with the new spirit of Russia, and so by surely shortening and perhaps quickly ending the war, would save millions of precious lives, certain else to be sacrificed to no purpose other than impoverishment of the human race for centuries to come. . . .

In the United States neither House of Congress nor Congress as a whole has been distinguished for any large or masterful grasp of one of the most important and critical situations in all our history. Senators and Representatives have showed themselves largely moved by faction rather than by patriotism. Sometimes they have supinely obeyed Presidential dictation; other times they have stubbornly resisted the will of the President, even when it was most clear that his will was identical with that of the nation. Through it all they have displayed an insatiable appetite for appropriational “pork.” It has been a sorry spectacle. . . .

Preparation to meet the competition [of Britain and Germany once the war is over] . . . must be effected upon the basis of . . . domestic reciprocity and co-operation between Government policy and private initiative and endeavor. . . . That does not mean, or at any rate it should not mean in America, government ownership of industries, nor corporate ownership of the government; either of these extremes would be a calamity, defeating the aims and objects of democracy. . . .

There can scarcely be a greater delusion than that government ownership and operation of industries and utilities is the only alternative to monopolies and offensive trusts. It is as unreasonable and as unfounded as to say that anarchy is the only alternative to despotism. The essential spirit of democracy requires for the individual a free initiative in industry just as much as in politics. The citizen must be as free to work as he is to vote. Moreover, there must be similar freedom of combination; and as citizens are free to combine themselves into political parties, in order to exert an influence and to accomplish ends which would be beyond their reach if acting individually, so they must be free to combine in business corporations, in order to effect results which would be impossible to individuals. That is democracy.

That does not, however, deny governmental control and regulation of corporations, as of individuals. The Government determines who may become citizens of the commonwealth, and it makes laws for the control of those citizens. So it determines under what conditions corporations may be created . . . and it can appropriately regulate and control those corporations in their activities. That is constitutional and logical. . . .

We ought . . . to realize the necessity of universal co-ordination of industries and complete co-operation between the Government and private enterprise, as the only rational and effective method of securing industrial and commercial efficiency which will enable us successfully to defend ourselves and to improve our opportunities in the era of restored peace which will presently come to the world.
Eugene Debs, Speech in Canton, Ohio, June 16, 1918

Wars throughout history have been waged for conquest and plunder... The feudal barons of the Middle Ages, the economic predecessors of the capitalists of our day, declared all wars. And their miserable serfs fought all the battles. The poor, ignorant serfs had been taught to revere their masters; to believe that when their masters declared war upon one another, it was their patriotic duty to fall upon one another and to cut one another’s throats for the profit and glory of the lords and barons who held them in contempt. And that is war in a nutshell. The master class has always declared the wars; the subject class has always fought the battles. The master class has had all to gain and nothing to lose, while the subject class has had nothing to gain and all to lose—especially their lives...

And here let me emphasize the fact—and it cannot be repeated, too often—that the working class who fight all the battles, the working class who make the supreme sacrifices, the working class who freely shed their blood and furnish the corpses, have never yet had a voice in either declaring war or making peace. It is the ruling class that invariably does both. They alone declare war and they alone make peace...

What a compliment it is to the Socialist movement to be persecuted for the sake of the truth! The truth alone will make the people free. And for this reason the truth must not be permitted to reach the people. The truth has always been dangerous to the rule of the rogue, the exploiter, the robber. So the truth must be ruthlessly suppressed. That is why they are trying to destroy the Socialist movement...

We do not attack individuals. We do not seek to avenge ourselves upon those opposed to our faith... There is no room in our hearts for hate, except for the system, the social system in which it is possible for one man to amass a stupendous fortune doing nothing, while millions of others suffer and struggle and agonize and die for the bare necessities of existence...

To turn your back on the corrupt Republican party and the corrupt Democratic party—the gold-dust lackeys of the ruling class counts for something. It counts for still more after you have stepped out of those popular and corrupt capitalist parties to join a minority party that has an ideal, that stands for a principle, and fights for a cause. This will be the most important change you have ever made...

They [the capitalists] are continually talking about your patriotic duty. It is not their but your patriotic duty that they are concerned about. There is a decided difference. Their patriotic duty never takes them to the firing line or chucks them into the trenches.

And now among other things they are urging you to “cultivate” war gardens, while at the same time a government war report just issued shows that practically 52 percent of the arable, tillable soil is held out of use by the landlords, speculators, and profiteers. They themselves do not cultivate the soil. They could not if they would. Nor do they allow others to cultivate it. They keep it idle to enrich themselves, to pocket the millions of dollars of unearned increment. Who is it that makes this land valuable while it is fenced in and kept out of use? It is the people. Who pockets this tremendous accumulation of value? The landlords. And these landlords who toil not and spin not are supreme among American “patriots.”...

This lord who practically owns the earth tells you that we are fighting this war to make the world safe for democracy—he, who shuts out all humanity from his private domain; he, who profiteers at the expense of the people who have been slain and mutilated by multiplied thousands, under pretense of being the great American patriot. It is he, this identical patriot who is in fact the arch-enemy of the people; it is he that you need to wipe from power. It is he who is a far greater menace to your liberty and your well-being than the Prussian junkers on the other side of the Atlantic Ocean...

[War comes in spite of the people. When Wall Street says war the press says war and the pulpit promptly follows with its Amen. In every age the pulpit has been on the side of the rulers and not on the side of the people. ...

No reverberatory effect of the great war [World war I] has caused American public opinion more solicitude than the failure of the ‘melting-pot.’ The discovery of diverse nationalistic feelings among our great alien population has come to most people as an intense shock. It has brought out the unpleasant inconsistencies of our traditional beliefs…

As the unpleasant truth has come upon us that assimilation in this country was proceeding on lines very different from those we had marked out for it, we found ourselves inclined to blame those who were thwarting our prophecies. The truth became culpable. We blamed the war, we blamed the Germans. And then we discovered with a moral shock that these movements had been making great headway before the war even began. We found that the tendency…has been for the national clusters of immigrants, as they became more and more firmly established and more and more prosperous, to cultivate more and more assiduously the literatures and cultural traditions of their homelands. Assimilation, in other words, instead of washing out the memories of Europe, made them more and more intensely real. Just as these clusters became more and more objectively American, did they become more and more German or Scandinavian or Bohemian or Polish.

To face the fact that our aliens are already strong enough to take a share in the direction of their own destiny, and that the strong cultural movements represented by the foreign press, schools, and colonies are a challenge to our facile attempts, is not, however, to admit the failure of Americanization. It is not to fear the failure of democracy. It is rather to urge us to an investigation of what Americanism may rightl…

What has been offered the newcomer has been the chance to learn English, to become a citizen, to salute the flag. And those elements of our ruling classes who are responsible for the public schools, the settlements, all the organizations for amelioration in the cities, have every reason to be proud of the care and labor which they’ve devoted to absorbing the immigrant. His opportunities the immigrant has taken to gladly, with almost pathetic eagerness to make his way in the new land without friction or disturbance. The common language has made not only for the necessary communication, but for all the amenities of life.

If freedom means the right to do pretty much as one pleases, so long as one does not interfere with others, the immigrant has found freedom, and the ruling element has been singularly liberal in its treatment of the invading hordes. But if freedom means a democratic cooperation in determining the ideals and purposes and industrial and social institutions of a country, then the immigrant has not been free, and Anglo-Saxon element is guilty of just what every dominant race is guilty of in every European country: the imposition of its own culture upon the minority peoples. The fact that this imposition has been so mild and, indeed, semi-conscious does not alter its quality. And the war has brought out just the degree to which that purpose of ‘Americanizing,’ that is, ‘Anglo-Saxonizing,’ the immigrant has failed…”

[W]e shall have to give up the search for our native ‘American’ culture. [There is no distinctively American culture. It is apparently our lot rather to be a federation of cultures. This we have been for half a century, and the war has made it ever more evident that this is what we are destined to remain…the failure of the melting-pot, far from closing the great American democratic experiment, means that it has only just begun…America is already the world-federation in miniature, the continent where for the first time in history has been achieved that miracle of hope, the peaceful living side by side, with character substantially preserved, of the most heterogeneous peoples under the sun. Nowhere else has such contiguity been anything but the breeder of misery. Here, notwithstanding our tragic failures of adjustment, the outlines are already too clear not to give us a new vision and a new orientation of the American mind in the world. It is for the American of the younger generation to accept this cosmopolitanism, and carry it along with selfconscious and fruitful purpose.

In the 1920s, women’s groups debated over the issue of whether an Equal Rights Amendment (ERA) should be added to the United States Constitution. The wording of the amendment was: “Equality of Rights Under the Law Shall Not Be Denied or Abridged By the United States Or Any State On Account of Sex.” The two documents below represent opposing sides in the debate over the ERA.

Yes! Elsie Hill, Chairman of the National Council of the Woman’s Party

The removal of all forms of the subjection of women is the purpose to which the National Woman’s Party is dedicated. Its present campaign to remove the discriminations against women in the laws of the United States is but the beginning of its determined effort to secure the freedom of women, an integral part of the struggle for human liberty for which women are first of all responsible. Its interest lies in the final release of woman from the class of a dependent, subservient being to which early civilization committed her.

The laws of various States at present hold her in that class. They deny her a control of her children equal to the father’s; they deny her, if married, the right to her own earnings; they punish her for offenses for which men go unpunished; they exclude her from public office and from public institutions to the support of which her taxes contribute. These laws are not the creation of this age, but the fact that they are still tolerated on our statute books and that in some States their removal is vigorously resisted shows the hold of old traditions upon us. Since the passage of the Suffrage Amendment the incongruity of these laws, dating back many centuries, has become more than ever marked…

The National Woman’s Party believes that it is a vital social need to do away with these discriminations against women and is devoting its energies to that end. The removal of the discriminations and not the method by which they are removed is the thing upon which the Woman’s Party insists. It has under consideration an amendment to the Federal Constitution which, if adopted, would remove them at one stroke, but it is at present endeavoring to secure their removal in the individual States by a blanket bill, which is the most direct State method…

There are two ways by which discriminations against women may be removed and by which equal rights before the law be conferred. One method is by a general enactment, such as the law to which I refer, and the other method is by amending a multiplicity of special statutes on a variety of subjects treated in the statutes. The first method is simple and direct; the second is cumbersome, complicated, and inconsistent with the amendment to the Federal Constitution granting full privileges and rights by the fundamental law.

No! Florence Kelley, Secretary of the National Consumers’ League

Sex is a biological fact. The political rights of citizens are not properly dependent upon sex, but social and domestic relations and industrial activities are. All modern-minded people desire that women should have full political equality and like opportunity in business and the professions. No enlightened person desires that they should be excluded from jury duty or denied the equal guardianship of children, or that unjust inheritance laws or discriminations against wives should be perpetuated.

The inescapable facts are, however, that men do not bear children, are freed from the burdens maternity, and are not susceptible, in the same measure as women, to poisons now increasingly characteristic of certain industries, and to the universal poison of fatigue. These are differences so far reaching, so fundamental that it is grotesque to ignore them. Women cannot be made men by act of the legislature or by amendment of the Federal Constitution. This is no matter of today or tomorrow. The inherent differences are permanent. Women will always need many laws different from those needed by men.

The effort to enact the blanket bill in defiance of all biological differences recklessly imperils the special laws for women as such, for wives, for mothers, and for wage-earners. The safeguarding clause affords no adequate safeguard for these protective measures…

If women are subject to the freedom of contract as men, will not women wage-earners lose the statutory eight-hour day, rest at night, and one day’s rest in seven, which they now have under statutes that, to that extent, limit their freedom of contract?

Is the National Woman’s Party for or against protective measures for wage-earning women? Will it publicly state whether it is for or against the eight-hour day and minimum-wage commissions for women? Yes or no?
Emergency Quota Act, also known as the Immigration Restriction Act of 1921
H.R. 4075; Pub.L. 67-5; 42 Stat. 5.
67th Congress; May 19, 1921.

Sec. 2. (a) That the number of aliens of any nationality who may be admitted under the immigration laws to the United States in any fiscal year shall be limited to 3 per centum of the number of foreign-born persons of such nationality resident in the United States as determined by the United States census of 1910. This provision shall apply only to the following: the shall operate this provision.

1924 Immigration Act, also known as the Johnson-Reed Act
68th Congress; May 26, 1924.

Sec. 11. (a) The annual quota of any nationality shall be 2 per centum of the number of foreign-born individuals of such nationality resident in continental United States as determined by the United States census of 1890, but the minimum quota of any nationality shall be 100.
# Census of 1910

## Table 1

<table>
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<th>Country of Birth</th>
<th>1910</th>
<th>% of Total Foreign Born</th>
<th>% of Total Population</th>
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<td>Born at sea</td>
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### Census of 1890

**Total Foreign Born Population Distributed According to Country of Birth: 1890.**

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<th>Country of Birth</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Per cent.</th>
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<td>Total foreign born</td>
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<td>North and South Americans</td>
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<td>South America</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cuba and West Indies</td>
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<tr>
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Socially and politically the presence of large numbers of Mexicans in this country gives rise to serious problems. The reports of the Immigration Commissions show that they lack ambition, are to a very large extent illiterate in their native language, are slow to learn English, and most cases show no political interest. In some instances, however, they have been organized to serve the purposes of political bosses, as for example in Phoenix, Arizona. Although more of them are married and have their families with them than is the case among the south European immigrants, they are unsettled as a class, move readily from place to place, and do not acquire or lease land to any extent. But their most unfavorable characteristic is their inclination to form colonies and live in a clannish manner. Wherever a considerable group of Mexicans are employed, they live together, if possible, and associate very little with members of other races. In the mining towns and other small industrial communities they live ordinarily in rude adobe huts outside of the town limits. As section hands they of course live as the members of the other races have done, in freight cars fitted with windows and bunks, or in rough shacks along the line of the railroad. In the cities their colonization has become a menace.

In Los Angeles the housing problem centers largely in the cleaning up or demolition of the Mexican "house courts," which have become the breeding ground of disease and crime, and which have now attracted a considerable population of immigrants of other races. It is estimated that approximately 2,000 Mexicans are living in these "house courts." Some 15,000 persons of this race are residents of Los Angeles and vicinity. Conditions of life among the immigrants of the city, which are molded to a certain extent by Mexican standards, have been materially improved by the work of the Los Angeles Housing Commission. However, the Mexican quarter continues to offer a serious social problem to the community.

In conclusion it should be recognized that although the Mexicans have proved to be efficient laborers in certain industries, and have afforded a cheap and elastic labor supply for the southwestern United States, the evils to the community at large which their presence in large numbers almost invariably brings may more than overbalance their desirable qualities. Their low standards of living and of morals, their illiteracy, their utter lack of proper political interest, the retarding effect of their employment upon the wage scale of the more progressive races, and finally their tendency to colonize in urban centers, with evil results, combine to stamp them as a rather undesirable class of residents.

The Mexicans of the lower class who constitute the greater part of the immigration element to this country, respond generously when rightly treated. They are intelligent and indefatigable workers when they are put in the right place. They are reliable, serious, of quick comprehension, and at the same time calm and reflective. In our country, and owing to causes against which the revolution is still fighting, those men have received almost no education; many of them do not know how to read and write. It is imperative that they be educated by you. You can make of them a very useful element in your social life and in the prosperity of the nation.

They come from Mexico in search of new horizons. They have been told about the prosperity of this country, of the liberty that they may enjoy here, of the big salaries they may obtain, of the practicability and value of your methods, of the low cost of living, and thousands of other things which are growing obsolete. They come seeking that wonderful country wherein they hope to find greater liberty than in their own…

Up to the present the majority of these men have returned to Mexico taking with them disappointment instead of fortune. They have complained of being treated like cattle; that no one knew how to understand their personality, their individuality; that they have fallen into hands that intended only to exploit their physical resistance, frugality, and unselfishness. They have rarely found anyone who has wisely opened to them the path of education, a course which would have been a thousand times more profitable and more human.

Unfortunately, our country is misrepresented and abused nearly everywhere in the United States, in theaters, moving pictures, newspapers, books, and private conversations. Perhaps (I would prefer to believe it so), it is done without ill intention, probably thoughtlessly, but it is done. Mexicans find an antagonistic atmosphere for everything that is Mexican, and this fact necessarily tends to make difficult their uniting with you. You could hardly become friends with one who begins by insulting your mother; and for us Mexicans love for our country is not less than love for our mothers. Both American and Mexican workers have a lot to learn from each other. When the time comes that you understand our country, as great as it is unfortunate, you will respect and love those good Mexicans who come to you full of hopes, and then you will know how to treat them in order that those hopes may not be in vain.
Stanley B. Norvell, letter to Victor F. Lawson (1919)

The Negro has also progressed in knowledge by his study of the white man, while the white man blinded by either his prejudice or by his indifference has failed to study the Negro judiciously, and as a consequence, he knows no more about him than he did fifty years ago and still continues to judge him and to formulate opinions about him by his erstwhile standards. Today we have with us a new Negro. A brand new Negro, if you please. What opportunities have you better class white people for getting into and observing the homes of the better class of colored people? Yet the duties of the colored man in his menial capacities gives him an insight of your home life. As a suggestion, if I may be permitted to make one, I suggest that the white members of this commission make it their business to try to obtain an opportunity through some of the colored members of the commission to visit the homes of some of our better class people. You will find that “Uncle Tom” that charming old figure of literature contemporary with the war of the rebellion is quite dead now and that his prototypes are almost as extinct as is the great auk, the dodo bird, old Dobbin and the chaise. . . . This was all brought about by education. . . . When a young colored boy of Chicago goes through the eight grades of grammar school and wins the cherished . . . diploma; then through a four year high school course and wins a university scholarship; and then goes to college and wins a degree . . . and is highly popular and well received among his fellow classmates, it is a very difficult thing for him to get it into his head that he is inferior to anybody that has no more knowledge, ability nor money than himself...

Since the war the Negro has been jolted into thinking by circumstances. . . . Negroes] have learned that there were treaties and boundaries and Leagues of Nations and mandatories, and Balkan states, and a dismembered Poland, a ravished Belgium, a stricken France, a soviet Russia and a republic in Ireland and so on, and they have . . . for the first time in their lives taken a peep of their own volition and purely because they wanted to know, into the workings of governmental things of those other countries, and have tried to reason out the possible real cause of all of this bloodshed and woe and misery along such international, allied and foreign government and other vague lines.

Now then, this has logically . . . brought us round to a sort of realization of how our government was made and is conducted. I venture to claim that any average Negro of some education, if closely questioned, and the questions were put to him in simple understandable form, will tell you that he finally has come to know that he counts as a part of his government, that he is a unit in it. It took a world war to get that idea into general Negro acceptance, but it is there now...

When the Negro ponders the situation—and now he is beginning to seriously do that—it is with a feeling of poignant resentment that he sees his alleged inferiority constantly and blatantly advertised at every hand, by the press, the pulpit, the stage and by the glaring and hideous signboards of segregation. Try to imagine, if you can, the feelings of a Negro army officer, who clothed in the full panoply of his profession and wearing the decorations for valor of three governments, is forced to the indignity of a jim-crow car and who is refused a seat in a theatre and a bed in a hotel. Think of the feelings of a colored officer, who after having been graduated from West Point and having worked up step by step to the rank of colonel to be retired on account of blood pressure—and other pressure—in order that he might not automatically succeed to the rank of general officer. Try to imagine the smouldering hatred within the breast of an overseas veteran who is set upon and mercilessly beaten by a gang of young hoodlums simply because he is colored. Think of the feelings in the hearts of boys and girls of my race who are clean, intelligent and industrious who apply for positions only to meet with the polite reply that, “We don’t hire niggers.” Think how it must feel to pass at the top of the list and get notice of appointment to some nice civil service position that is paid for out of the taxes of the commonwealth, and upon reporting to assume the duties thereof, to be told that there has been a mistake made in the appointment...

As soon as the white man is willing to inform himself about the true status of the Negro as he finds him today, and is willing to take off the goggles of race prejudice and to study the Negro with the naked eye of fairness, and to treat him with justice and equity, he will come to the conclusion that the Negro has “arrived” and then voila, you have the solution to the problem.
Alain Locke, *The New Negro: Voices from the Harlem Renaissance* (1925)

In the last decade something beyond the watch and guard of statistics has happened in the life of the American Negro and the three norms who have traditionally presided over the Negro problem have a changeling in their laps. The Sociologist, The Philanthropist, the Race-leader are not unaware of the New Negro, but they are at a loss to account for him. He simply cannot be swathed in their formulae. For the younger generation is vibrant with a new psychology; the new spirit is awake in the masses, and under the very eyes of the professional observers is transforming what has been a perennial problem into the progressive phases of contemporary Negro life.

With this renewed self-respect and self-dependence, the life of the Negro community is bound to enter a new dynamic phase, the buoyancy from within compensating for whatever pressure there may be of conditions from without. The migrant masses, shifting from countryside to city, hurdle several generations of experience at a leap, but more important, the same thing happens spiritually in the life attitudes and self-expression of the Young Negro, in his poetry, his art, his education and his new outlook, with the additional advantage, of course, of the poise and greater certainty of knowing what it is all about. From this comes the promise and warrant of a new leadership. As one of them has discerningly put it:

> We have tomorrow
> Bright before us, Like a flame.
> Yesterday, a night-gone thing, A sun-down name.
> And dawn today, Broad arch above the road we came.
> We march!

This is what, even more than any “most creditable record of fifty years of freedom,” requires that the Negro of today be seen through other than the dusty spectacles of past controversy. The day of “auntyes,” “uncles” and “mammies” is equally gone. Uncle Tom and Sambo have passed on, and even the “Colonel” and “George” play barnstorm roles from which they escape with relief when the public spotlight is off. The popular melodrama has about played itself out, and it is time to scrap the fictions, garret the bogeys and settle down to a realistic facing of facts.

First we must observe some of the changes which since the traditional lines of opinion were drawn have rendered these quite obsolete. A main change has been, of course, that shifting of the Negro population which has made the Negro problem no longer exclusively or even predominantly Southern. Why should our minds remain sectionalized, when the problem itself no longer is? Then the trend of migration has not only been toward the North and the Central Midwest, but city-ward and to the great centers of industry? The problems of adjustment are new, practical, local and not peculiarly racial. Rather they are an integral part of the large industrial and social problems of our present-day democracy. And finally, with the Negro rapidly in process of class differentiation, if it ever was warrantable to regard and treat the Negro en masse, it is becoming with every day less possible, more unjust and more ridiculous.

Here in Manhattan is not merely the largest Negro community in the world, but the first concentration in history of so many diverse elements of Negro life. It has attracted the African, the West Indian, the Negro American; has brought together the Negro of the North and the Negro of the South; the man from the city and the man from the town and village; the peasant, the student, the business man, the professional man, artist, poet, musician and worker, preacher and criminal, exploiter and social outcast. Each group has come with its own separate motives and for its own special ends, but their greatest experience has been the finding of one another. Proscription and prejudice have thrown these dissimilar elements into a common area of contact and interaction. Within this area, race sympathy and unity have determined a further fusing of sentiment and experience. So what began in terms of segregation becomes more anymore, as its elements mix and react, the laboratory of a great race-welding. Hitherto, it must be admitted that American Negroes have been a race more in name than in fact, or to be exact, more in sentiment than in experience. The chief bond between them has been that of a common condition rather than a common consciousness; a problem in common rather than a life in common. In Harlem, Negro life is seizing upon its first chances for group expression and self-determination. That is why our comparison is taken with those nascent centers of folk-expression and self-determination which are playing a creative part in the world today. Without pretense to their political significance, Harlem has the same role to play for the New Negro as Dublin has had for the New Ireland or Prague for the New Czechoslovakia.

The [Ku Klux] Klan has now come to speak for the great mass of Americans of the old pioneer stock. We believe that it does fairly and faithfully represent them, and our proof lies in their support. To understand the Klan, then, it is necessary to understand the character and present mind of the mass of old-stock Americans. The mass, it must be remembered, as distinguished from the intellectually mongrelized “Liberals.”

These are, in the first place, a blend of various peoples of the so-called Nordic race, the race which, with all its faults, has given the world almost the whole of modern civilization. The Klan does not try to represent any people but these.

There is no need to recount the virtues of the American pioneers; but it is too often forgotten that in the pioneer period a selective process of intense rigor went on. From the first only hardy, adventurous and strong men and women dared the pioneer dangers; from among these all but the best died swiftly, so that the new Nordic blend which became the American race was bred up to a point probably the highest in history. This remarkable race character, along with the new-won continent and the new-created nation, made the inheritance of the old-stock Americans the richest ever given to a generation of men.

In spite of it, however, these Nordic Americans for the last generation have found themselves increasingly uncomfortable, and finally deeply distressed…Finally came the moral breakdown that has been going on for two decades. One by one all our traditional moral standards went by the boards, or were so disregarded that they ceased to be binding. The sacredness of our Sabbath, of our homes, of chastity, and finally even of our right to teach our own children in our own schools fundamental facts and truths were torn away from us. Those who maintained the old standards did so only in the face of constant ridicule.

Along with this went economic distress. The assurance for the future of our children dwindled. We found our great cities and the control of much of our industry and commerce taken over by strangers, who stacked the cards of success and prosperity against us. Shortly they came to dominate our government. The *bloc* system by which this was done is now familiar to all. Every kind of inhabitant except the Americans gathered in groups which operated as units in politics, under orders of corrupt, self-seeking and un-American leaders, who both by purchase and threat enforced their demands on politicians. Thus it came about that the interests of Americans were always the last to be considered by either national or city governments, and that the native Americans were constantly discriminated against, in business, in legislation and in administrative government.

So the Nordic American today is a stranger in large parts of the land his fathers gave him. Moreover, he is a most unwelcome stranger, one much spit upon, and one to whom even the right to have his own opinions and to work for his own interests is now denied with jeers and revilings. “We must Americanize the Americans,” a distinguished immigrant said recently. Can anything more clearly show the state to which the real American has fallen in this country which was once his own?...

All this has been true for years, but it was the World War that gave us our first hint of the real cause of our troubles, and began to crystallize our ideas. The war revealed that millions whom we had allowed to share our heritage and prosperity, and whom we had assumed had become part of us, were in fact not wholly so. They had other loyalties: each was willing—anxious!—to sacrifice the interests of the country that had given him shelter to the interests of the one he was supposed to have cast off; each in fact did use the freedom and political power we had given him against ourselves whenever he could see any profit for his older loyalty.

This, of course, was chiefly in international affairs, and the excitement caused by the discovery of disloyalty subsided rapidly after the war ended. But it was not forgotten by the Nordic Americans. They had been awakened and alarmed; they began to suspect that the hyphenism which had been shown was only a part of what existed; their quiet was not that of renewed sleep, but of strong men waiting very watchfully. And presently they began to form decisions about all those aliens who were Americans for profit only.

They decided that even the crossing of salt-water did not dim a single spot on a leopard; that an alien usually remains an alien no matter what is
done to him, what veneer of education he gets, what oaths he takes, nor what public attitudes he adopts. They decided that the melting pot was a ghastly failure, and remembered that the very name was coined by a member of one of the races—the Jews—which most determinedly refuses to melt. They decided that in every way, as well as in politics, the alien in the vast majority of cases is unalterably fixed in his instincts, character, thought and interests by centuries of racial selection and development, that he thinks first for his own people, works only with and for them, cares entirely for their interests, considers himself always one of them, and never an American. They decided that in character, instincts, thought, and purposes—in his whole soul—an alien remains fixedly alien to America and all it means.

They saw, too, that the alien was tearing down the American standard of living, especially in the lower walks. It became clear that while the American can out-work the alien, the alien can so far under-live the American as to force him out of all competitive labor. So they came to realize that the Nordic can easily survive and rule and under-live the Americans as to force him out of all competitive labor. So they came to realize that the Nordic can easily survive and rule and increase if he holds for himself the advantages won by strength and daring of his ancestors in times of stress and peril, but that if he surrenders those advantages to the peoples who could not share the stress, he will soon be driven below the level at which he can exist by their low standards, low living and fast breeding. And they saw that the low standard aliens of Eastern and Southern Europe were doing just that thing to us.

They learned, though more slowly, that alien ideas are just as dangerous to us as the aliens themselves, no matter how plausible such ideas may sound. With most of the plain people this conclusion is based simply on the fact that the alien ideas do not work well for them. Others went deeper and came to understand that the differences in racial background, in breeding, instinct, character and emotional point of view are more important than logic. So ideas which may be perfectly healthy for an alien may also be poisonous for Americans...

As they learned all this the Nordic Americans have been gradually arousing themselves to defend their homes and their own kind of civilization. They have not known just how to go about it; the idealist philanthropy and good-natured generosity which led to the philosophy of the melting pot have died hard. Resistance to the peaceful invasion of the immigrant is no such simple matter as snatching up weapons and defending frontiers, nor has it much spectacular emotionalism to draw men to the colors.

The old-stock Americans are learning, however. They have begun to arm themselves for this new type of warfare. Most important, they have broken away from the fetters of the false ideals and philanthropy which put aliens ahead of their own children and their own race.

To do this they have had to reject completely—and perhaps for the moment the rejection is a bit too complete—the whole body of “Liberal” ideas which they had followed with such simple, unquestioning faith. The first and immediate cause of the break with Liberalism was that it had provided no defense against the alien invasion, but instead had excused it—even defended it against Americanism. Liberalism is today charged in the mind of most Americans with nothing less than national, racial and spiritual treason...

We are a movement of the plain people, very weak in the matter of culture, intellectual support, and trained leadership. We are demanding, and we expect to win, a return of power into the hands of the everyday, not highly cultured, not overly intellectualized, but entirely unspoiled and not de-Americanized, average citizen of the old stock. Our members and leaders are all of this class—the opposition of the intellectuals and liberals who held the leadership, betrayed Americanism, and from whom we expect to wrest control, is almost automatic...

Our critics have accused us of being merely a “protest movement,” of being frightened; they say we fear alien competition, are in a panic because we cannot hold our own against the foreigners. That is partly true. We are a protest movement—protesting against being robbed. We are afraid of competition with peoples who would destroy our standard of living. We are suffering in many ways, we have been betrayed by our trusted leaders, we are half beaten already. But we are not frightened nor in a panic. We have merely awakened to the fact that we must fight for our own. We are going to fight—and win!...
Herbert Hoover, address to Republican National Convention, Cleveland, June 10, 1936.

I have given about four years to research into the New Deal, trying to determine what its ultimate objectives were, what sort of a system it is imposing on this country.

To some people it appears to be a strange interlude in American history in that it has no philosophy, that it is sheer opportunism, that it is a muddle of a spoils system, of emotional economics, of reckless adventure, of unctuous claims to a monopoly of human sympathy, of greed for power, of a desire for popular acclaim and an aspiration to make the front pages of the newspapers. That is the most charitable view.

To other people it appears to be a cold-blooded attempt by starry-eyed boys to infect the American people by a mixture of European ideas, flavored with our native predilection to get something for nothing. You can choose either one you like best. But the first is the road of chaos which leads to the second. Both of these roads lead over the same grim precipice that is the crippling and possibly the destruction of the freedom of men...

So much for the evidence that the New Deal is a definite attempt to replace the American system of freedom with some sort of European planned existence. But let us assume that the explanation is simply hit-and-run opportunism, spoils system, and muddle.

We can well take a moment to explore the prospects of American ideals of liberty and self-government under that philosophy. The Supreme Court has reversed some ten or twelve of the New Deal major enactments. Many of these acts were a violation of the rights of men and of self-government. Despite the sworn duty of the Executive and Congress to defend these rights, they have sought to take them into their own hands. That is an attack on the foundations of freedom.

More than this, the independence of the Congress, the Supreme Court, and the Executive are pillars at the door of liberty. For three years the word "must" has invaded the independence of Congress. And the Congress has abandoned its responsibility to check even the expenditures of money. They have turned open appropriations into personal power. These are destructions of the very safeguards of free people.

We have seen these gigantic expenditures and this torrent of waste pile up a national debt which two generations cannot repay. One time I told a Democratic Congress that "You cannot spend yourselves into prosperity." You recall that advice did not take then. It hasn't taken yet.

Billions have been spent to prime the economic pump. It did employ a horde of paid officials upon the pump handle. We have seen the frantic attempts to find new taxes on the rich. Yet three-quarters of the bill will be sent to the average man and the poor. He and his wife and his grandchildren will be giving a quarter of all their working days to pay taxes. Freedom to work for himself is changed into a slavery of work for the follies of government.

We have seen an explosive inflation of bank credits by this government borrowing. We have seen varied steps toward currency inflation that have already enriched the speculator and deprived the poor. If this is to continue, the end result is the tears and anguish of universal bankruptcy and distress. No democracy in history has survived the final stages of inflation.

We have seen the building up of a horde of political officials. We have seen the pressures upon the helpless and destitute to trade political support for relief. Both are a pollution of the very fountains of liberty.

We have seen the most elemental violation of economic law and experience. The New Deal forgets it is solely by production of more goods and more varieties of goods and services that we advance the standard of living and security of men. If we constantly decrease costs and prices and keep up earnings, the production of plenty will be more and more widely distributed. These laws may be restitched in new phrases but they are the very shoes of human progress...

[The] great structure of human progress can be built only by free men and women. The gravest task which confronts the party is to regenerate these freedoms... There are some principles that cannot be compromised. Either we shall have a society based upon ordered liberty and the initiative of the individual, or we shall have a planned society that means dictation, no matter what you call it or who does it. There is no halfway ground.

Hornell, New York
March 7, 1934

My Dear Senator:

It seems very apparent to me that the Administration at Washington is accelerating it's pace towards socialism and communism. Nearly every public statement from Washington is against stimulation of business which would in the end create employment.

Everyone is sympathetic to the cause of creating more jobs and better wages for labor; but, a program continually promoting labor troubles, higher wages, shorter hours, and less profits for business, would seem to me to be leading us fast to a condition where the Government must more and more expand it's relief activities, and will lead in the end to disaster to all classes.

I believe that every citizen is entitled to know the policy of the Government, and I am so confused that I wish you would write me and advise me whether it is the policy of this Administration, of which you are a very important part, to further discourage business enterprise, and eventually set up a program which eliminates private industry and labor, —call it what you will: socialism, facism, or communism, or by any other name.

I am not addicted to annoying public office holders with correspondence, but if there are any private rights left in this country, then I would appreciate an early reply to this letter, so that I may take such action as is still possible, to protect myself and my family.

With kindest personal regards,

Yours truly,

W.L.C. [male]


For 20 years I have been in the battle to provide that, so long as America has, or can produce, an abundance of the things which make life comfortable and happy, that none should own so much of the things which he does not need and cannot use as to deprive the balance of the people of a reasonable proportion of the necessities and conveniences of life. The whole line of my political thought has always been that America must face the time when the whole country would shoulder the obligation which it owes to every child born on earth—that is, a fair chance to life, liberty, and happiness.

I had been in the United States Senate only a few days when I began my effort to make the battle for a distribution of wealth among all the people a national issue for the coming elections. On July 2, 1932, pursuant to a promise made, I heard Franklin Delano Roosevelt, accepting the nomination of the Democratic Party at the Chicago convention for President of the United States, use the following words:

“Throughout the Nation, men and women, forgotten in the political philosophy of the Government for the last years, look to us here for guidance and for a more equitable opportunity to share in the distribution of the national wealth.”…

It is not out of place for me to say that the support which I brought to Mr. Roosevelt to secure his nomination and election as President—and without which it was hardly probable he would ever have been nominated—was on the assurances which I had that he would take the proper stand for the Redistribution of wealth in the campaign. He did that much in the campaign; but after his election, what then? I need not tell you the story. We have not time to cry over our disappointments, over promises which others did not keep, and over pledges which were broken.

We have not a moment to lose.

It was after my disappointement over the Roosevelt policy, after he became President, that I saw the light. I soon began to understand that, regardless of what we had been promised, our only chance of securing the fulfillment of such pledges was to organize the men and the women
of the United States so that they were a force capable of action, and capable of requiring such a policy from the lawmakers and from the President after they took office. That was the beginning of the Share Our Wealth Society movement.

Here is the whole sum and substance of the Share Our Wealth movement:

1. Every family to be furnished by the Government a homestead allowance, free of debt, of not less than one-third the average family wealth of the country, which means, at the lowest, that every family shall have the reasonable comforts of life up to a value of from $5,000 to $6,000. No person to have a fortune of more than 100 to 300 times the average family fortune, which means that the limit to fortunes is between $1,500,000 and $5,000,000, with annual capital levy taxes imposed on all above $1,000,000.

2. The yearly income of every family shall not be less than one-third of the average family income, which means that, according to the estimates of the statisticians of the United States Government and Wall Street, no family’s annual income would be less than from $2,000 to $2,500. No yearly income shall be allowed to any person larger than from 100 to 300 times the size of the average family income, which means that no person would be allowed to earn in any year more than from $600,000 to $1,800,000, all to be subject to present income-tax laws.

3. To limit or regulate the hours of work to such an extent as to prevent overproduction; the most modern and efficient machinery would be encouraged, so that as much would be produced as possible so as to satisfy all demands of the people, but to also allow the maximum time to the workers for recreation, convenience, education, and luxuries of life.

4. An old age pension to the persons over 60.

5. To balance agricultural production with what can be consumed according to the laws of God, which includes the preserving and storage of surplus commodities to be paid for and held by the Government for the emergencies when such are needed. Please bear in mind, however, that when the people of America have had money to buy things they needed, we have never had a surplus of any commodity. This plan of God does not call for destroying any of the things raised to eat or wear, nor does it countenance wholesale destruction of hogs, cattle, or milk.

6. To pay the veterans of our wars what we owe them and to care for their disabled.

7. Education and training for all children to be equal in opportunity in all schools, colleges, universities, and other institutions for training in the professions and vocations of life, to be regulated on the capacity of children to learn, and not upon the ability of parents to pay the costs. Training for life’s work to be as much universal and thorough for all walks in life as has been the training in the arts of killing.

8. The raising of revenue and taxes for the support of this program to come from the reduction of swollen fortunes from the top, as well as for the support of public works to give employment whenever there may be any slackening necessary in private enterprise.
Working People’s Letters to New Dealers, 1930s.

Letter to Frances Perkins, January 27, 1935

Winston-Salem, North Carolina
Dear Miss Perkins:

Please allow me to state some of the facts concerning our wages paid in the Tobacco factories first I want to call your attention to the firm I am working for. The Brown & Williamson Co; We make 40 hours a week and we don’t average $10.00 per week for semi skilled labor in my department where the plug tobacco is manufactured we that are doing semi skilled labor make less than those doing common labor. They make around $12.00 per week while we make from $7.00 to $10.00 and maybe some few of us might make $13.00 once and a while. Now how can we be considered in the Presidents spending program when we don’t make enough to live on and pay our just and honest debts. Please take notice Meat advanced from 6 cents to 16 cents sugar from 5 to 6 cents flour has almost doubled and house rent and every thing but our wages the idea of men young and middle age making less than $2.00 while we are piling up millions for the firms we work and the sad part of it is the majority are afraid to make an out cry about conditions. Now I think our great trouble lies in the fact that nobody ever investigates our working conditions and the greatest portion of us are colored people and I think everybody hates a colored man. How can we support a family of 7 or 8 send our children to school and teach them citizenship when capitalist choke us and make criminals out of some of us that might be a bit weak. Now Miss Perkins just think about our condition how hard it is to come up to the American Standard of living on less than $10.00 for 40 hours work and 7 or 8 in family or it seems that my race of people are not considered in the American Standard of living. Now most of my people are afraid to complain because some few years ago the R. J. Reynolds Tobacco Co. discharged every one that joined a union they were trying to organize here and for reason you can’t find any union workers in the R. J. Reynolds firm among the colored people. . . . It seems that some investigations should be made. Now how can we pay our debts educate our children and if we have to call a doctor we don’t have the money to pay him for his visit. .

O. G.

Letter to Franklin D. Roosevelt, November 23, 1936

Paris, Texas
Dear President

You are the one & only President that ever helped a Working Class of People. I and thousands of men just like me were in the fight for you & I for one will go down for you any day I am a White Man American age, 47 married wife 2 children in high School am a Finishing room foreman I mean a Working foreman & am in a furniture Factory here in Paris Texas where there is 175 to 200 Working & when the NRA came in I was Proud to See my fellow workmen Rec 30 Per hour in Place of 8 cents to 20 cents Per hour yet the NRA did not make any allowance for Skilled labor or foreman unless they rec as much as 35.00 [dollars] Per Week & very few Furniture Makers rec Such a Price I have bin with this firm for 25 years & they have Surly reaped the harvest. . . . I can’t see for my life President why a man must toil & work his life out in Such factories 10 long hours ever day except Sunday for a small sum of 15 cents to 35 cents per hour & pay the high cost of honest & deason living expences is thaire any way in the world to help this one class of Laboring People just a little I admit this class of Working People should form a union but ever time it talked the big boy owners say we will close down then it is more releaf workers to take care of more expence to our Government and more trouble to you what we need is a law passed to shorten our hours at a living & let live scal & take more men off the Government expense & put them in the factories & get things to running normal but if a co cuts hours & then tells Foreman shove & push them & keeps putting out as much with short hours & driving the men like convicts it will never help a bit you have had your load & I well know it but please see if something can be done to help this one Class of Working People the factories are a man killer not venelated or kept up just a bunch of Republicanks Grafters 90/100 of them Please help us some way I Pray to God for relief. I am a christian . . . and a truthful man & have not told you wrong & am for you to the end.
Letter to Frances Perkins, July 27, 1937

Plaquemine, Louisiana
Dear Miss Perkins:

I think you are pretty square to the average laboring man, but I am wondering if anyone has told you of the cruel and terrible condition that exist in this part of the country or the so called sugar cane belt in Louisiana. I am sure that it hasn’t made any progress or improvement since slavery days and to many people here that toil the soil or saw mills as laboring men I am sure slavery days were much better for the black slaves had their meals for sure three times a day and medical attention at that. but if an American nowadays had that much he is a communist I am speaking of the labor not the ones that the government give a sugar bounty too but the real forgotten people for the ones the government give the sugar bounty too are the ones that really don’t need it for those same people that has drawn the sugar bonus for two years has never gave an extra penny to their white and black slaves labor. I will now make an effort to give you an idea of the terrible inhuman condition.

I will first give you the idea of the sugar cane tenants and plantations poor laboring people. The bell rings at 2 a.m. in the morning when all should really be sleeping at rest. they work in the summer until 9 or 10 a.m. the reason they knock them off from the heat is not because of killing the labor from heat but they are afraid it kills the mule not the slave. Their wages runs from go 90¢ to $1.10 per day. Their average days per week runs from three to four days a week in other words people that are living in so called United States have to live on the about $4.00 per week standing of living in a so called American Community which is way below the Chinese standard of living for the Chinese at least have a cheaper food and clothing living but here one has to pay dear for food and clothing because these sugar cane slave owners not only give inhuman wages but the ones that work for them have to buy to their stores, which sells from 50 per cent to 60 per cent higher than the stores in town still these same people that are worst than the old time slave owners or yelling and hollering for more sugar protection, why should they get more when they don’t pay their white and black slaves more. It is true they give the white and black slaves a place to live on. But Miss Perkins if you were to see these places they live on you’d swear that this is not our so call rich America with it high standing of living for I am sure that the lowest places in China or Mexico or Africa has better places to live in.

I am writing you this hoping that you will try to read it and understand the situation which if you think is not true you can send an investigator in this section of Louisiana that has American freedom of speech for some hasn’t that speech in our so called free America. . . .

Thanking you for humanity sake.
R. J.

Letter to Franklin D. Roosevelt, November 27, 1939

Detroit, Michigan
President Roosevelt
Dear Honorable Sir:

I and my husband are and have been Americans for three generations and we are proud of what our parents did also our grandparents to help America progress. We have tried so hard these past seven years we lost our furniture twice lost our car our insurance even my engagement ring and finally the wedding ring to buy groceries pay rent and for illness. Neither one of us are lazy he worked in steel mills auto factories painting dishwashing and anything he could get. I worked at waitress janitress selling to make a few dollars now my health is slowly ebbing. I was a widow when I married my present husband my first husband died shortly after the world war having served as a submarine chaser. I received a check for $1.00 for each day he served he died leaving me two lovely children. Why should descent American people be made suffer in this manner living in an attic room paying $5.00 per week and if its not paid out you go on the streets. Welfare has never solved these problems as there are far too many inefficient social workers also too much political graft for it to survive or even help survive. We are one family out of 100,000 that are in the same position right here in Detroit where the ones we labor for and help build up vast fortunes and estates do nothing but push us down farther. They cheat the government out of taxes hire foreign labor at lower rates and if we get discouraged and take some groceries to feed our family we must serve time.

A true American mother & family M. Q. L.
Jesse O. Thomas, “Negro Workers and Organized Labor,”

A LITTLE more than a year ago the National Industrial Recovery Act was passed by the United States Congress. It carried significant implications for all groups of American citizens. For organized labor it created one of the most challenging situations in its history. The devastating lethargy that characterized workers in the mills, shops and mines, due partly to the protracted unemployment and widespread depression, was displaced by a new spirit of collective mindedness.

This awakened consciousness of the New Deal for labor manifested itself in an almost universal spirit of restlessness which was characterized by simultaneous strikes bobbing up in every part of the country…These labor controversies have enveloped every type of workmen including laundry workers, longshoremen, truck drivers, textile operatives and those employed in the iron and steel industries…

This new spirit toward collective action has registered in unionized activity in the automobile, clothing, coal, rubber and textile industries as well as in the power and electric equipment enterprises. Representatives of the textile industry claim that more than 130,000 workers in various sections of the country have been organized in recent months. They claim that in the South there are some three hundred locals recently organized--seventy-four of them in the State of North Carolina…

Labor in the United States is facing the most firmly entrenched and ruthless capitalistic system of the world. Any labor movement that is to survive the transition through which labor is now passing must be so constructed that it can lend itself; to the highly integrated structure of American industry. Already new trends are arising in the rank of labor characterized by unauthorized strikes against the present leadership…

Except in a few isolated cases, Negroes are not being included in any considerable numbers either in the controversial aspects of this new birth or by inclusion into peaceful membership of the various labor unions.

While Section 7 A [of the NIRA] has greatly increased the security of labor in general; in so far as the different labor organizations thus benefited deny and exclude Negroes from their membership by constitutions or rituals, the position of Negro labor has been made less favorable. It was the intention of the government in passing this legislation on behalf of labor to benefit all workers. On account of the unsportsmanlike and anti-social attitude of the majority of the membership and heads of many of the unions and crafts, the position of Negroes has been made even more disadvantageous.

In the City of St. Louis, we learn that Negro laborers were forced out of employment by the threats of the American Federation of Labor made by the Business Agent against the contractors. Jobs were picketed by Negroes and whites who were not affiliated with the American Federation of Labor. They were attacked by three car loads of American Federation of Labor representatives.

On the Homer Phillips Hospital, a new Negro municipal hospital in St. Louis, the General Tile Company employed a Negro as tile setter; whereupon all the A. F of L. men walked off and tied up the job.

As a result an organization has been formed known as the "Allied Building Contractors Association" in St. Louis composed of both Negro and white contractors who will not limit the employment of any particular race, but will extend the employment opportunity to all people on the basis of competency and efficiency.

The Homer Phillips Hospital project has been closed and nailed up for eight weeks, according to our informant, on account of the unwillingness on the part of the membership of the American Federation of Labor to work on the same job with Negroes.

In the midst of all that is being done, by, for, with or against organized labor, the Negro stands aghast. Having little or no information as to the history of different organized labor movements--only a faint understanding concerning the technique of collective bargaining; in a more or less detached manner, the Negro wage earners of America stand and look at organized labor…

One hundred and thirteen persons out of every thousand gainfully employed in the United States ten years of age and over are Negroes, and yet only fourteen out of every thousand of organized workers are Negroes.
Ellen Woodward, speech “The Lasting Values of WPA,” 1930s

No one can better appreciate the lasting values of the work relief program than we women, for its results affect primarily that which is closest to our hearts--the home.

Every time a man is taken from the demoralizing ranks of the jobless, every time a woman is removed from the humiliation of a breadline, and given work to do, a home somewhere becomes more secure.

This, in a word, is the first aim of the Works Progress Administration: To put destitute people to work at familiar tasks, that their moral fibre may not be undermined and their hopes and ambitions killed, by the forced acceptance of public charity in the form of a dole.

No one, better than a woman, understands the importance to a Nation of preserving its human resources. The proverb, "What profit it a man that he gain the whole world, if he lose his own soul," may well be paraphrased to read "What profit it a nation to keep its budget balanced if it lose its own life blood--the courage and integrity of its people?"

Obviously, that courage and integrity cannot be fostered on a permanent diet of public dole! It was with this truth in mind, that President Roosevelt conceived the fundamental idea of a work relief program as an alternative to the dole. It is with this in mind that the Works Progress Administration has labored unceasingly this past year at the titanic task of finding jobs for nearly 4,000,000 of the nation's jobless who were stagnating on relief.

This job-finding task has been accomplished only by keeping all other considerations secondary to this single aim of finding projects in each community which could be accomplished with the man-power or woman-power available from the relief rolls of the particular community in which they live.

This aim has been stated repeatedly, yet, there still remains wide-spread misunderstanding of the basic idea behind WPA and how it operates. And this misunderstanding is responsible for much of the adverse--wholly uninformed--criticism hurled broadside at the WPA.

WPA Projects are chosen...always with the thought uppermost that the specific community has a definite number of specific people to be taken from the relief rolls and put to work, and that they can do this or that type of work.

If your community has no bricklayers or carpenters in need of employment, obviously a construction project requiring much skilled brickwork or carpentry would fail to meet the requirement.

In planning a project to supply jobs for unemployed women, by the same token, the yardstick would scarcely be the needs of the highway or sewerage departments. Widows, school teachers, nurses, and dieticians cannot be put to work digging ditches.

Yet, when some destitute widows whose only training had been in the daily routine of household tasks, were given jobs as "housekeepers' assistants", and were sent to the homes of poor people in one of our large Metropolitan cities, to assist with the housework during a mother's illness or absence, loud were the jeers and cries of "boondoggling."

Ignoring the primary object of this particular project--to give work to women who sorely needed it--and distorting the secondary aim, to give them something useful to do within their own community; the editors of hostile newspapers branded "housekeepers' assistants" as "government meddlers in the proper business of the mothers of the land."

The facts of one of the cases specifically cited were these: a mother who had several small children to care for had fallen ill. The father of the family, who had just begun work on a new job--after months of idleness--was faced with the problem of neglecting either his family in their distress or his job. He had no money to pay for a trained nurse. His plight came to the attention of a WPA supervisor of the "housekeepers' aid" project, and a woman was sent to his home to nurse his wife and see that the children were properly clothed and fed until she could again resume her duties.

Is this a useless waste of public money? Is not such a service as this--giving new hope and interest to the woman needing employment and saving that family from disintegration and despair--of lasting value to the community? If healthy families and happy homes are a permanent result, there is but one answer!
Jose Flores, Mexican farm worker, describes life in Farm Security Administration Migrant Labor Camp, El Rio, California, 1941

I: What about the places you live in in the camp here? What are they like?

F: Well, here we’re living in tents, just a platform and then the tent on top of the platform.

I: How do most of the people feel about coming in here?

F: Well, at the time that they came in here they just felt that it was the best thing to do so they could keep on the strike. They didn’t worry that the tents were not like home or the home they used to live in or anything because they felt that it was what they should do to be able to keep up the strike.

I: In order to be together here, was that the idea?

F: Yeah, their main purpose was they wanted to stick together because only by sticking together could they obtain a gain in the strike or, even if it wasn’t a strike, in other forms of life they could at least learn how to work together on different things.

I: What do you think most of them want, what’s their main ambition right now.

F: Well, the main ambition now is to get a better wage than what they’re getting because the cost of living right now is very expensive. They can’t make a living on twenty-seven and a half cents an hour. That’s what they get paid for work. It was alright if it was steady work all the year through, but sometimes they don’t work the whole day or probably they won’t work for week or so. The feel like the thing they need most now is to be recognized as a union and get a better wage.

I: They’d like to go back to living on the ranches?

F: They’d like to go back to the camps but they refuse to go back unless they go back as a union or as a group. They don’t want to go back as individuals because they know very well that three weeks or a month after they go back they’ll get fired and as a group they won’t be able to fire them all.

I: When the Mexicans were put out [evicted], a lot of the Okies took their places.

F: Well, the Okies were put in before the Mexicans were put out because they were living in the groves. They had their trailers or tents in the groves. They were all ready to go in as soon as the Mexicans were thrown out. Their [the Mexicans’] reaction against them [the Okies] wasn’t so bad because they felt that the Okies were just a poor laboring class like ourselves. And at the time that they were brought in they were promised good wages and they were promised that their wives would work at the ranches where the strike was on and they were hungry and they didn’t have enough money to keep up and so they thought that it was a good chance to make a little money and fill their stomachs up with food. So we didn’t feel bad against them, we didn’t have anything against them because we just thought they were pushed in the same . . . as we could have been pushed in to one of their own strikes probably. So we didn’t feel bad against them . . .

I: Most of the young people around here were born here, weren’t they? Most of the young people in this camp.

F: Well, yeah, most of the young people in this camp, they were born here, most of them.

I: Well they think of themselves as Americans, don’t they?

F: Yeah, they do.

I: Well, do they think they are getting all the benefits that Americans are supposed to get?

F: No, they don’t think they are getting them because for example, like in theaters, they go to the theater, there’s always a middle aisle and two side aisles and they’re not permitted to sit in the middle aisle. They’ve got to sit on the side aisle just because they are Mexicans.

I: Are there any other things like that that they do? How about schools?

F: Well, in schools they [Americans] always try to have them [Mexicans] separate at least if the county can go to the expense of building a school and there’s enough Mexican people around which can be put in a separate school, they [Americans] just build a school and put them in a

1 Americans who migrated to California from Oklahoma and other mid-west states during the Depression.
separate school. That’s what happened here in our county. There was about a hundred children that used to be going to the American school, so in 1931 they just thought they’d get rid of the Mexican greasers and they’d build a school separately for themselves for the Mexican people so they just went ahead and built a school just to have them in a separate school.

I: Even though there really wasn’t a need for another school?

F: No, there was no need for another school. The school that they were going to was big enough for all of them. The only reason was that they wanted to get rid of them and put them in a different school.

I: Well, the people, especially the young people, do they worry very much about trying to do much about it?

F: No, they don’t seem to worry much about it. They just seem to think that it just came to happen and it has happened and probably isn’t much they can do about it, about changing the situation. I’m referring to the discrimination of Mexican people in this part of the country here. They feel that it came to happen and they just can’t do much about it.

I: What about the cops? Can you tell me about the fiesta the other night? Can you tell me about that fight?

F: Oh, yes. At the . . . fiesta there it’s always been a fact that every year the Mexican boys they fight with American boys and usually the officers come around and instead of picking up both parties involved in the fight, they pick up the Mexicans mostly. Sometimes they’ll pick one American fellow and three Mexicans just to make it look good. But still they’re picking mostly Mexicans all the time and throwing them in the can instead of picking up both parties to teach both parties a lesson. They seem to teach just the Mexican people a lesson, but instead of being a lesson they enforce the idea that they [Mexican boys] should come back next year and fight them [American boys] again because they get the raw deal out of the fight or the decision, so the officers they just throw them in the can.

I: What do you think can be done about it?

F: Well, the only thing that I feel that could done about it is by forming young people’s clubs or older people’s clubs too and contacting different other American clubs and telling them about discrimination against Mexican people. That’s about the only way that I feel it could be done, that something could be done about it, because it’s really the public who makes this discrimination against Mexican people, it’s not the government particularly, it’s the public itself that does it.

I: You were saying something a while ago about what they did in Los Angeles about discrimination.

F: Well, in Los Angeles they tried to get together and form clubs and in some cases a certain Mexican fellow applies for a job and the place where they tell him they couldn’t give him a job because he’s a Mexican, this certain club that he belongs to, they try to contact the manager or the superintendent at the plant and explain to him that even though he’s a Mexican he’s drafted and is counted in this country for the army and he’s gotta do every other thing that the regular American citizen does, so why shouldn’t he be allowed to have a good job to live by, a good job that he can depend on? If he has to do every other thing that the American citizen does for the benefit of the country, why shouldn’t the country let him have a good job or else the individual manager of the plant should give him a good job. You’re expected to be a good citizen. They only way I feel they can make good citizens out of Mexican people is treating them like American citizens.

I: Do you think they make good citizens?

F: Oh, absolutely, they sure will. I know they will make good citizens, if they’re just treated the right way.

I: Do you think the project like this camp that we’re in can be any help in training people to be good citizens?

F: I feel that it does a lot of good to the people. And it would do them a lot of good to become good citizens, a camp like this will. I can see that certain forms of getting together that do get together it helps a lot.
Lois Lettow, memories of World War II (2004)

I was born in Davenport, Iowa on July 24, 1916. We moved to Florida when I was 7; then to Oakland, California in April of 1929.

Because I had 2 children, I could not enlist in one of the services, so decided to work in a defense industry. The Moore Dry Dock Company was located on the Oakland estuary, so I applied there and was accepted for training as a sheet metal helper in April of 1943. I worked there until September of 1945.

My first day of work I thought would be my last. I was assigned to the Sheet Metal Shop on the Outfitting Dock. My job was to use a 3G hydraulically operated grinder which was used to grind rough edges of the flanges for connecting lengths of ventilation ducts, which were installed throughout the ships’ cargo holds. The flanges were low enough to require bending down. I had never been so tired and achy.

On my second day, one of the men told me that the foreman did not approve of women working in the shipyard, and that was his method of trying to discourage us. Needless to say, my aches and pains were forgotten, and after the third day, the foreman relented and assigned me to other tasks.

Among these were helping to position huge sheets of metal on the folding machine to shape them into rectangular ducts, and bucking rivets to hold the seam together. Each sheet of metal had one edge folded over about an inch that overlapped the other sheet edge. Holes were drilled at intervals and then I crawled inside the duct with a supply of soft rivets, pushed rivets through the holes and then held a bucking bar against them while the sheet metal man flattened the ends with a hammer. This job is pictured in the article, “Tin Men,” which I have supplied. It is incredible to look back and realize the miles of ducts that were formed in this manner. After each section of the duct was completed, the flanges were welded to each end and then transported to the hull for assembly.

The floor of the shop was made of dirt and became damp during rainy weather. So, one day, the foreman decided the men working at the benches needed to have platforms on which to stand. He told me to go up on one of the hulls to the carpenter shop and ask one of them to build some platforms for us. The carpenter agreed and we soon had them. After that I was the fair-haired girl and was assigned to the tool crib where I checked out rivets and hand tools.

We worked hard, many 10-hour days and 7-day weeks. One year the only holiday we had was Christmas Day. Two requirements we didn’t enjoy were the necessity of confining our hair in bandannas at all times, and wearing hard hats on the docks or hulls. (The hard hats made wonderful rain hats.)...

In the beginning the shipyard was divided between Maritime and Navy. One of the naval ships docked was the mother ship for submarines. I was permitted to board her and was really impressed with the amenities, especially the soda fountain.

Eventually the Navy left and Maritime took over the entire yard. I was put in charge of the large tool crib. It was necessary at times to go aboard the hulls, to both those still on the ways and the outfitting dock. The odors of hot steel caused by welding, drilling and riveting were overpowering. I was fortunate that I didn’t need to work in those spaces.

One aspect I remember with gratitude was the day-care center maintained for the children of defense workers. The only requirement was that the child be toilet trained. The women operating the center were wonderful. The center was adjacent to a school and when my son was old enough he was taken there to attend kindergarten.

I went to work in a car pool and they were cooperative enough to drop my children off at the center about 6:30 a.m. Each child had his or her own cot. They were put back to bed until breakfast time. A lasting legacy was that when my children were in elementary school, teachers of both of them told me how well adjusted they were. I attribute a large part of that to the fact that they were in the day-care center. I hope those women will receive the recognition they deserve.

One of the problems with working sometimes 10-hour day, cooking, childcare, housework was that there were times I couldn’t complete everything. There were no synthetic or wash and wear fabrics. Most clothes were made of cotton and little girls wore dresses that needed to be dampened and ironed. There were evenings I simply didn’t have the energy to do any ironing and I apologized one day to the day care worker about wrinkled clothes. She told me not to be concerned, that my children were always clean and that was what mattered.
**Helen Ann Derusha, memories of World War II (2004)**

I was born in Camas Valley, Oregon and raised in California. My origins are an American mixture of Irish, Scotch, Welsh, and German. My father was a Civil Engineer and worked for the State of California. We moved to several places in California during my young growing years – Vacaville, Sacramento, Visalia, and Bakersfield. I attended Bakersfield Junior College after High School before my marriage to Loring R. Derusha in 1940, in Bakersfield, California.

At the time World War II I was married to my present husband, Loring, who joined the Navy in 1942 and served as a Pharmacist Mate. We owned a small produce business in a grocery store and worked there together. We had no children.

My feelings during the war were of utmost concern for my loved one as he served during the war on a YMS minesweeper in the Pacific Theater. I waited anxiously for each letter from him and read each scrap of news about the war in the evening paper and listened to the radio news.

Some of the first changes in my life after the war started were that I moved back home to my parents home in Bakersfield, and took a job as a riveter working on U.S. Army training planes at Minter Field, California, some twenty miles north of Bakersfield. My job as a riveter was an interesting one and challenging. I was among the first women employed at that type of work. We were given some training with a riveting gun and some metal sheeting to practice on under the careful eyes of an instructor. We were impressed with the importance of our job as many lives would depend on our work. The planes we worked on took many a hard landing and had to be repaired with the utmost skill. I also learned to use the bucking bar and a great deal of my work consisted, because of my small stature, of working inside the airplanes and using a bucking bar while my partner worked on the outside with a rivet gun.

While writing the above paragraph I can recall some of the incidents of that time and remember that we women weren’t exactly welcomed with open arms by the men who would work as our partners. They showed some hostility towards us which led to some teasing and down grading. We seemed to be accepted in a little while and our work progressed more smoothly. I remember one buxom good looking young lady, who was actually named Rosie, who loved her red tight fitting blouses and which bothered the men so much the manager asked her to wear her coveralls to work.

After basic training, my husband was stationed at Oakland Naval Supply Depot in Oakland, California before being sent overseas and I was able to join him there. The Bank of America trained me as a Teller and I worked for them in Berkeley, California and then transferred to the Bakersfield, California Bank of America when my husband left to serve in the Pacific Area.

We were not unionized at the Bank of America and we didn’t concern ourselves about this. While working as a Savings Teller I worked with a group of women and one older man, Mr. Jones, who was in charge of the department. As Mr. Jones had had no experience on the inner workings of the Savings department, we all stayed after hours and tried to balance the ancient machine used to notate savings’ balances, sometimes staying until none or ten o’clock at night. I enjoyed having a position in the bank and felt good about earning my own money.

While serving overseas my husband wrote frequently but since he served on a minesweeper the mail came sporadically and was heavily censored. But I was happy to receive it in any condition.

Concerning wartime shortages, we managed quite well and I don’t remember any real hardships. When I lived at home and worked at Minter Field I rode in a car pool and we gave the driver our gas ration books and a fee for driving us as I did not have a car. When I lived at home with my family, we turned our food ration books over to our Mother and she purchased our home supplies. While working at Minter Field I sometimes carpooled with different groups of people at different times as I worked day, graveyard, and swing shifts. My sister had returned home also during the war and we entertained ourselves by going to Movies or to see friends.
Beatrice Clifton Morales, memories of World War II (1987)

[Morales applied for a job at Lockheed during the war]

So I took the forms and when I got home and told my husband, oh! He hit the roof. He was one of those men that didn't believe in the wife ever working; they want to be the supporter. I said, 'Well, I've made up my mind. I'm going to go to work regardless of whether you like it or not.' I was determined.

To me, everything was new... They put me way up in the back, putting little plate nuts and drilling holes. They put me with some guy—he was kind of a stinker, real mean. A lot of them guys at the time resented women coming into jobs, and they let you know about it... I was feeling just horrible. Horrible. Because I never worked with men, to be with men alone other than my husband. ... So then time went on and I made a mistake. I messed up something, made a ding. He got so irritable with me, he says, 'You're not worth the money Lockheed pays you.'

I was very scared because, like I say, I had never been away like that and I had never been among a lot of men. Actually, I had never been out on my own. Whenever I had gone anywhere, it was with my husband. It was all building up inside of me, so when that guy told me that I wasn't worth the money Lockheed paid me, it just came out in tears... When I got home, the kids just said, 'Oh, Mom is here.' My husband, he didn't have very much to say, 'cause he didn't approve from the beginning. As time went on, his attitude changed a little, but I don't think he ever really, really got used to the ideas of me working.

I bought the clothing at Sears. It was just a pair of pants and a blouse. To tell you the truth, I felt kind of funny wearing pants... And those shoes! I wasn't used to low shoes. Even in the house, I always wore high heels. That's how I started.

I went from 65 cents to $1.05 [per hour]. That was top pay. It felt good and, besides, it was my own money. I could do whatever I wanted with it because my husband, whatever he was giving to the house, he kept on paying it. I used to buy clothes for the kids; buy little things that they needed. I had a bank account and I had a little savings at home where I could get ahold of the money right away if I needed it. Julio never asked about it. He knew how much I made; I showed him... My money, I did what I wanted.

I got home and my mother told me, she says, 'Gerry is very sick. He's got a lot of fever and it won't go down.'... My husband, right away, he jumped: 'You see, the kids are like this because you're not here.' My mother was there, but he blamed everything on me. We got into a little bit of an argument on account of that, and then I said, 'Okay, I'll quit.' I didn't want to, but I said my boy comes first.... When I quit, I just took over the same as I was before—taking care of my kids. Well, it was kind of quiet and I wasn't too satisfied. That's why I started looking to go out to work... [after some unsatisfying jobs, she tries Lockheed again] In 1950 I wrote to Lockheed asking them if they had a job for me because I knew that they were still taking people. They wrote and told me that they weren't taking any women, but that they would the following year. The next year, the minute I received that telegram, I headed for Lockheed.
Soldiers Send Messages Home (1942-1945)

Sergeant Irving Strobing

*Radio Address from Corregidor, Philippines, May 5 or 6, 1942*

They are not yet near. We are waiting for God only knows what. How about a chocolate soda? Not many. Not here yet. Lots of heavy fighting going on. We’ve only got about one hour, twenty minutes before . . . We may have to give up by noon. We don’t know yet. They are throwing men and shells at us and we may not be able to stand it. They have been shelling us faster than you can count. . . .

We’ve got about fifty-five minutes and I feel sick at my stomach. I am really low down. They are around us now smashing rifles. They bring in the wounded every minute. We will be waiting for you guys to help. This is the only thing I guess that can be done. General Wainwright is a right guy and we are willing to go on for him, but shells are dropping all night, faster than hell. Damage terrific. Too much for guys to take.

Enemy heavy cross-shelling and bombing. They have got us all around and from skies. From here it looks like firing ceased on both sides. Men here all feeling bad, because of terrific nervous strain of the siege. Corregidor used to be a nice place, but it’s haunted now. Withstood a terrific pounding. Just made broadcast to Manila to arrange meeting for surrender. Talk made by General Beebe. I can’t say much.

I can hardly think. Can’t think at all. Say, I have sixty pesos you can have for this weekend. The jig is up. Everyone is bawling like a baby. They are piling dead and wounded in our tunnel. Arms weak from pounding [radio] key long hours, no rest, short rations. Tired. I know now how a mouse feels. Caught in a trap waiting for guys to come along finish it. Got a treat. Can pineapple. Opening it with a Signal Corps knife.

My name Irving Strobing. Get this to my mother. Mrs. Minnie Strobing, 605 Barbey Street, Brooklyn, New York. They are to get along O.K. Get in touch with them soon as possible. Message, My love to Pa, Joe, Sue, Mac, Carrie, Joy and Paul. Also to all family and friends. God bless ’em all, hope they be here when I come home. Tell Joe wherever he is to give ’em hell for us. My love to all. God bless you and keep you. Love.

Sign my name and tell Mother how you heard from me. Stand by . . . Strobing

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John Conroy

*Letter, December 24, 1942*

Mare Island Naval Hospital, San Francisco

Dear Mother and Dad:

. . . You keep asking so I’ll tell you. I have been shell-shocked and bomb-shocked. My memory is very dim regarding my civilian days. They feel that sudden shock in action now would affect my sanity. All the boys back here have received the same diagnosis. Injury to my back helps to make further combat service for me impossible. It’s so very difficult for me to explain, to say the things I want to, my thoughts are so disconnected.

Of course I’m not insane. But I’ve been living the life of a savage and haven’t quite got used to a world of laws and new responsibilities. So many of my platoon were wiped out, my old Parris Island buddies, that it’s hard to sleep without seeing them die all over again. Our living conditions on Guadalcanal had been so bad—little food or hope—fighting and dying each day—four hours sleep out of 72—the medics here optimistically say I’ll pay for it the rest of my life. My bayonet and shrapnel cuts are all healed up, however. Most of us will be fairly well in six months, but none of us will be completely cured for years. My back is in bad condition. I can’t stand or walk much. The sudden beat of a drum or any sharp, resonant noise has a nerve-ripping effect on us.

Ah, well, let’s not think, but just be happy that we’ll all be together soon. Loads and loads of love,

John

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Dear family: . . . Dad, you ask for my opinion and reactions and those of the GI in general about several things. . . . For one thing everybody is mostly concerned with getting his own skin back to the States and home, regardless of what he leaves here and in what condition it is. I think this is a pretty universal feeling anyway—leave it to the next fellow or the politicians to worry about the world. I wanna go home and get some small measure of happiness out of life. There are many of us who feel that not much good will be done with all these noble efforts. First of all, the death of President Roosevelt was almost a mortal blow. Second the regrowth of national selfishness which we can plainly see in France, where we are no longer the saviors but annoying foreigners who interfere with their life. Thirdly, the turmoil in England, and finally the pathetic shortsightedness of those who keep hinting at and whooping up talk of war with Russia. Everywhere we hear how terrible the occupying Russian forces are, how barbaric, how savage, how primitive, etc. etc., and I blush to say, many who say this are wearing the American uniform, men who should realize that without Russia’s help we would have surely been beaten. . . . [S]ooner or later . . . the disarming friendliness and cleverness of the Germans will make us doubt if they are so bad. “After all they are a civilized nation, they have great men, etc. etc.” My own solution . . . would have a very liberal policy of passes so that men could get out of this accursed country say once a month or so, to breathe the freer air of the Allied countries. Let them change the occupying personnel every six months or so. Let the German PWs be kept in the Army and used as labor of all kinds, farm, factory, etc., instead of discharging them here while we poor bastards have to sit and sweat in the Army in a foreign hated land. I would crush every vestige of military or industrial might in Germany. Let them be a pauper nation. They deserve it. Let the Russians take over, they have shown how to handle them—be rough with them. Of course some innocent and some helpless will suffer—too bad—in the Army you learn callousness. It is impossible I know, but I would love to personally shoot all young Hitlerites, say between the ages of 10 and 30, and have a rigidly supervised program of education for the young. I don’t know if that gives you any better idea of how I feel. . . .

You also asked about the concentration camps and the mass grave victims. It is hard for me to convey all of it to you. You drive through the surrounding towns where there are happy little children at play, and people going about their business, looking like any towns-people the world over, yet within two miles of them, its charged fences harsh against the plains, its chimneys belching smoke from cremating ovens—within two miles is a concentration camp whose very existence is such a horrible thought that a man may doubt that any good can exist in the same world, let alone area, with them. The humans who, through long dead, are yet physically alive with their stick like limbs and vacant faces are so terrible a blasphemy on civilization—yet the German civilians nearby either pretend not to realize them, or what is worse, see no wrong. God, how can people be like that.

The mass graves and reburials are, for brutality, even worse. Is your stomach strong? Let me tell you about Volarv. The SS troopers and the civilians of the town, including some women, when the Germans were falling back in April, rounded up some 200 Jews with about 50 women in the lot. The men were emasculated, disembowelled and shot. The women were killed very simply. A bayonet was run into their reproductive organs and into their bowels. Pretty, isn’t it. When they were being dug up from the ditch where they had been thrown, placed in rude but honorable wooden coffins, and being reburied in plots dug by German civilians and soldiers, American officers and men called all the people out of the town to witness the burial, to see the bodies, to touch the bodies, to have that memory printed on their minds of what a horrible thing they had done, only a few of them showed either remorse or sickness. They stood there, hard and sullen-faced, muttering and obstinate. They would turn away and be forced to turn back and look. These same people would have cried in anguish had this been done to their own, to Germans, but what if it happened to inferior people, to Jews, and Russians, and Poles? A shrug of the shoulders, too bad, it had to be done. And yet how quickly these things can be forgotten here. . . . I want to get out of this country while I still hate it. Forgive me if this picture seems too pessimistic—I have been here longer than I want to, and it is all getting on my nerves.

Love, David
Pvt. Bert Babero, letter to Truman K. Gibson, March 13, 1944

Atty. Truman K. Gibson
Civilian Aid to Secy of War
White House, Washington, D. C.

Co. C. grp. 2, 1st Reg.
Camp Reynolds, Pa.
Mar. 13, 1944

Dear Mr. Gibson:

As you may recall I wrote you several times while at camp Berkeley, Texas. I am at present in Pennsylvania, on the brink of embarkation for overseas duty. Leaving the south was like coming back to God’s country.

You might readily understand my aversion when I discovered that as far north as Penn. segregation and discrimination is practised in the army camps. I sometimes wish I could be indifferent but I can’t. Right is right and I realize there’s no such thing as half way right. Although in comparison with conditions at camp Berkeley, these here are much more favorable but why are we segregated? Why aren’t we allowed to attend but one theater out of four on the post and why can’t we use any post exchange of our choice? I tried to answer these questions but I’m on the ebb of becoming neurotic.

I didn’t start this war but I didn’t hesitate to come when I believed I was needed. When inducted I honestly believed that as a negroe, I comprised an important part of this nation and it was my patriotic duty to avail myself when my country was in danger of peril. My attitude now is greatly changed. I’m indifferent toward the whole affair.

I sincerely hope that through you Mr. Gibson and others like you, that America will be awaken unto the realization that we too are human and desire to be treated as such and also we want to readily do our part in the progress of the nation.

I feel sure that while we are fighting on the battlefront, you will continually be fighting on the home front, for your fight is as great as ours. Good luck.

Yours truly,

Pvt. Bert B. Babero

Dear fellow Negro Americans, be not dismayed by these terrible times. You possess power, great power. Our problem is to harness and hitch it up for action on the broadest, daring and most gigantic scale.

In this period of power politics, nothing counts but pressure, more pressure, and still more pressure, through the tactic and strategy of broad, organized, aggressive mass action behind the vital and important issues of the Negro. To this end, we propose that ten thousand Negroes MARCH ON WASHINGTON FOR JOBS IN NATIONAL DEFENSE AND EQUAL INTEGRATION IN THE FIGHTING FORCES OF THE UNITED STATES.

An "all-out" thundering march on Washington, ending in a monster and huge demonstration at Lincoln's Monument will shake up white America.

It will shake up official Washington.

It will give encouragement to our white friends to fight all the harder by our side, with us, for our righteous cause.

It will gain respect for the Negro people.

It will create a new sense of self-respect among Negroes.

But what of national unity?

We believe in national unity which recognizes equal opportunity of black and white citizens to jobs in national defense and the armed forces, and in all other institutions and endeavors in America. We condemn all dictatorships, Fascist, Nazi and Communist. We are loyal, patriotic Americans all.

But if American democracy will not defend its defenders; if American democracy will not protect its protectors; if American democracy will not give jobs to its toilers because of race or color; if American democracy will not insure equality of opportunity, freedom and justice to its citizens, black and white, it is a hollow mockery and belies the principles for which it is supposed to stand. . . .

Today we call on President Roosevelt, a great humanitarian and idealist, to . . . free American Negro citizens of the stigma, humiliation and insult of discrimination and Jim-Crowism in Government departments and national defense.

The Federal Government cannot with clear conscience call upon private industry and labor unions to abolish discrimination based on race and color as long as it practices discrimination itself against Negro Americans.
Justice Frank Murphy, Dissent in Korematsu v. United States 323 U.S. 214 (1944)

MR. JUSTICE MURPHY, dissenting.

It must be conceded that the military and naval situation in the spring of 1942 was such as to generate a very real fear of invasion of the Pacific Coast, accompanied by fears of sabotage and espionage in that area. The military command was therefore justified in adopting all reasonable means necessary to combat these dangers. In adjudging the military action taken in light of the then apparent dangers, we must not erect too high or too meticulous standards; it is necessary only that the action have some reasonable relation to the removal of the dangers of invasion, sabotage and espionage. But the exclusion, either temporarily or permanently, of all persons with Japanese blood in their veins has no such reasonable relation. And that relation is lacking because the exclusion order necessarily must rely for its reasonableness upon the assumption that all persons of Japanese ancestry may have a dangerous tendency to commit sabotage and espionage and to aid our Japanese enemy in other ways. It is difficult to believe that reason, logic, or experience could be marshalled in support of such an assumption.

That this forced exclusion was the result in good measure of this erroneous assumption of racial guilt, rather than *bona fide* military necessity is evidenced by the Commanding General's Final Report on the evacuation from the Pacific Coast area. In it, he refers to all individuals of Japanese descent as "subversive," as belonging to "an enemy race" whose "racial strains are undiluted," and as constituting "over 112,000 potential enemies . . . at large today" along the Pacific Coast. In support of this blanket condemnation of all persons of Japanese descent, however, no reliable evidence is cited to show that such individuals were generally disloyal, or had generally so conducted themselves in this area as to constitute a special menace to defense installations or war industries, or had otherwise, by their behavior, furnished reasonable ground for their exclusion as a group.

Justification for the exclusion is sought, instead, mainly upon questionable racial and sociological grounds not ordinarily within the realm of expert military judgment, supplemented by certain semi-military conclusions drawn from an unwarranted use of circumstantial evidence. Individuals of Japanese ancestry are condemned because they are said to be "a large, unassimilated, tightly knit racial group, bound to an enemy nation by strong ties of race, culture, custom and religion." They are claimed to be given to "emperor worshipping ceremonies," and to "dual citizenship." Japanese language schools and allegedly pro-Japanese organizations are cited as evidence of possible group disloyalty, together with facts as to certain persons being educated and residing at length in Japan. It is intimated that many of these individuals deliberately resided "adjacent to strategic points," thus enabling them to carry into execution a tremendous program of sabotage on a mass scale should any considerable number of them have been inclined to do so.

The need for protective custody is also asserted. The report refers, without identity, to "numerous incidents of violence," as well as to other admittedly unverified or cumulative incidents. From this, plus certain other events not shown to have been connected with the Japanese Americans, it is concluded that the "situation was fraught with danger to the Japanese population itself," and that the general public "was ready to take matters into its own hands." Finally, it is intimated, though not directly charged or proved, that persons of Japanese ancestry were responsible for three minor isolated shellings and bombings of the Pacific Coast area, as well as for unidentified radio transmissions and night signaling.

The main reasons relied upon by those responsible for the forced evacuation, therefore, do not prove a reasonable relation between the group characteristics of Japanese Americans and the dangers of invasion, sabotage and espionage. The reasons appear, instead, to be largely an accumulation of much of the misinformation, half-truths and insinuations that for years have been directed against Japanese Americans by people with racial and economic prejudices -- the same people who have been among the foremost advocates of the evacuation. A military judgment based upon such racial and sociological considerations is not entitled to the great weight ordinarily given the judgments based upon strictly military considerations. Especially is this so when every charge relative to race, religion, culture, geographical location, and legal and economic status has been substantially discredited by independent studies made by experts in these matters.

Before you read the document, make sure you read the textbook’s discussion of the Cold War, and keep an eye out for discussions of “containment.” Also read the paragraph below.

This document was a response to an article in *Foreign Affairs* magazine, written by American diplomat George F. Kennan (“Mr. X”), where Kennan talked about how to deal with the Soviet Union. Kennan wrote:

> the main element of any United States policy toward the Soviet Union must be a long-term, patient but firm and vigilant containment of Russian expansive tendencies ... Soviet pressure against the free institutions of the Western world is something that can be contained by the adroit and vigilant application of counterforce at a series of constantly shifting geographical and political points, corresponding to the shifts and maneuvers of Soviet policy, but which cannot be charmed or talked out of existence."

The policy of containment, which Mr. X recommends, demands the employment of American economic, political, and in the last analysis, American military power at "sectors" in the interior of Europe and Asia. This requires, as I have pointed out, ground forces, that is to say reserves of infantry, which we do not possess.

The United States cannot by its own military power contain the expansive pressure of the Russians "at every point where they show signs of encroaching." The United States cannot have ready "unalterable counterforce" consisting of American troops. Therefore, the counterforces which Mr. X requires have to be composed of Chinese, Afghans, Iranians, Turks, Kurds, Arabs, Greeks, Italians, Austrians, of anti-Soviet Poles, Czechoslovaks, Bulgars, Yugoslavs, Albanians, Hungarians, Finns and Germans.

The policy can be implemented only by recruiting, subsidizing and supporting a heterogeneous array of satellites, clients, dependents and puppets. The instrument of the policy of containment is therefore a coalition of disorganized, disunited, feeble or disorderly nations, tribes and factions around the perimeter of the Soviet Union.

To organize a coalition among powerful modern states is, even in time of war and under dire necessity, an enormously difficult thing to do well. To organize a coalition of disunited, feeble and immature states, and to hold it together for a prolonged diplomatic siege, which might last for ten or fifteen years, is, I submit, impossibly difficult.

It would require, however much the real name for it were disavowed, continual and complicated intervention by the United States in the affairs of all the members of the coalition which we were proposing to organize, to protect, to lead and to use. Our diplomatic agents abroad would have to have an almost unerring capacity to judge correctly and quickly which men and which parties were reliable containers. Here at home Congress and the people would have to stand ready to back their judgments as to who should be nominated, who should be subsidized, who should be whitewashed, who should be seen through rose-colored spectacles, who should be made our clients and our allies.

Mr. X offers us the prospect of maintaining such a coalition indefinitely until-eventually—the Soviet power breaks up or mellows because it has been frustrated. It is not a good prospect. Even if we assume, which we ought not, that our diplomatic agents will know how to intervene shrewdly and skilfully all over Asia, the Middle East, and Europe, and even if we assume, which the Department of State cannot, that the American people will back them with a drawing account of blank checks both in money and in military power, still it is not a good prospect. For we must not forget that the Soviet Union, against which this coalition will be directed, will resist and react.

In the complicated contest over this great heterogeneous array of unstable states, the odds are heavily in favor of the Soviets. For if we are to succeed, we must organize our satellites as unified, orderly and reasonably contented nations. The Russians can defeat us by disorganizing states that are already disorganized, by disuniting peoples that are torn with civil strife, and by inciting their discontent which is already very great.
As a matter of fact this borderland in Europe and Asia around the perimeter of the Soviet Union is not a place where Mr. X's "unassailable barriers" can be erected. Satellite states and puppet governments are not good material out of which to construct unassailable barriers. A diplomatic war conducted as this policy demands, that is to say conducted indirectly, means that we must stake our own security and the peace of the world upon satellites, puppets, clients, agents about whom we can know very little. Frequently they will act for their own reasons, and on their own judgments, presenting us with accomplished facts that we did not intend, and with crises for which we are unready. The "unassailable barriers" will present us with an unending series of insoluble dilemmas. We shall have either to disown our puppets, which would be tantamount to appeasement and defeat and the loss of face, or must support them at an incalculable cost on an unintended, unforeseen and perhaps undesirable issue.

The issues that face us are momentous, involving the fulfillment or destruction not only of this Republic but of civilization itself. They are issues which will not await our deliberations. With conscience and resolution this Government and the people it represents must now take new and fateful decisions…

The idea of freedom…is peculiarly and intolerably subversive of the idea of slavery. But the converse is not true. The implacable purpose of the slave state [the Soviet Union] to eliminate the challenge of freedom has placed the two great powers at opposite poles. It is this fact which gives the present polarization of power the quality of crisis.

The free society values the individual as an end in himself, requiring of him only that measure of self-discipline and self-restraint which make the rights of each individual compatible with the rights of every other individual. The freedom of the individual has as its counterpart, therefore, the negative responsibility of the individual not to exercise his freedom in ways inconsistent with the freedom of other individuals and the positive responsibility to make constructive use of his freedom in the building of a just society.

From this idea of freedom with responsibility derives the marvelous diversity, the deep tolerance, the lawfulness of the free society. This is the explanation of the strength of free men. It constitutes the integrity and the vitality of a free and democratic system. The free society attempts to create and maintain an environment in which every individual has the opportunity to realize his creative powers. It also explains why the free society tolerates those within it who would use their freedom to destroy it. By the same token, in relations between nations, the prime reliance of the free society is on the strength and appeal of its idea, and it feels no compulsion sooner or later to bring all societies into conformity with it.

For the free society does not fear, it welcomes, diversity. It derives its strength from its hospitality even to antipathetic ideas. It is a market for free trade in ideas, secure in its faith that free men will take the best...
wares, and grow to a fuller and better realization of their powers in exercising their choice.

The idea of freedom is the most contagious idea in history, more contagious than the idea of submission to authority. For the breadth of freedom cannot be tolerated in a society which has come under the domination of an individual or group of individuals with a will to absolute power. Where the despot holds absolute power--the absolute power of the absolutely powerful will--all other wills must be subjugated in an act of willing submission, a degradation willed by the individual upon himself under the compulsion of a perverted faith. It is the first article of this faith that he finds and can only find the meaning of his existence in serving the ends of the system…

[T]he peace the Soviet Union seeks is the peace of total conformity to Soviet policy…The assault on free institutions is world-wide now, and in the context of the present polarization of power a defeat of free institutions anywhere is a defeat everywhere…

Thus unwillingly our free society finds itself mortally challenged by the Soviet system. No other value system is so wholly irreconcilable with ours, so implacable in its purpose to destroy ours, so capable of turning to its own uses the most dangerous and divisive trends in our own society, no other so skillfully and powerfully evokes the elements of irrationality in human nature everywhere, and no other has the support of a great and growing center of military power. . . .

A more rapid build-up of political, economic, and military strength and thereby of confidence in the free world. . . . is the only course which is consistent with progress toward achieving our fundamental purpose. The frustration of the Kremlin design requires the free world to develop a successfully functioning political and economic system and a vigorous political offensive against the Soviet Union. These, in turn, require an adequate military shield under which they can develop. It is necessary to have the military power to deter, if possible, Soviet expansion, and to defeat, if necessary, aggressive Soviet or Soviet-directed actions of a limited or total character. The potential strength of the free world is great; its ability to develop these military capabilities and its will to resist Soviet expansion will be determined by the wisdom and will with which it undertakes to meet its political and economic problems.

1. Military aspects. . . . The history of war . . . indicates that a favorable decision can only be achieved through offensive action. Even a defensive strategy, if it is to be successful, calls not only for defensive forces to hold vital positions while mobilizing and preparing for the offensive, but also for offensive forces to attack the enemy and keep him off balance…

In the broadest terms, the ability to perform these tasks requires a build-up of military strength by the United States and its allies to a point at which the combined strength will be superior for at least these tasks, both initially and throughout a war, to the forces that can be brought to bear by the Soviet Union and its satellites.

2. Political and economic aspects. The immediate objectives . . . are a renewed initiative in the cold war and a situation to which the Kremlin would find it expedient to accommodate itself, first by relaxing tensions and pressures and then by gradual withdrawal. The United States cannot alone provide the resources required for such a build-up of strength. The other free countries must carry their part of the burden, but their ability and determination to do it will depend on the action the United States takes to develop its own strength and on the adequacy of its foreign political and economic policies. . . .

At the same time, we should take dynamic steps to reduce the power and influence of the Kremlin inside the Soviet Union and other areas under its control. The objective would be the establishment of friendly regimes not under Kremlin domination. Such action is essential to engage the Kremlin’s attention, keep it off balance, and force an increased expenditure of Soviet resources in counteraction. In other words, it would be the current Soviet cold war technique used against the Soviet Union.

A program for rapidly building up strength and improving political and economic conditions will place heavy demands on our courage and intelligence; it will be costly; it will be dangerous. But half-measures will be more costly and more dangerous, for they will be inadequate to prevent and may actually invite war. Budgetary considerations will need to be subordinated to the stark fact that our very independence as a nation may be at stake. . . .
President’s Commission on Human Rights, *To Secure These Rights* (1947)

THE NATIONAL Government of the United States must take the lead in safeguarding the civil rights of all Americans. We believe that this is one of the most important observations that can be made about the civil rights problem in our country today. We agree with words used by the President, in an address at the Lincoln Memorial in Washington in June, 1947:

> We must make the Federal Government a friendly, vigilant defender of the rights and equalities of all Americans. …Our National Government must show the way.

It is essential that our rights be preserved against the tyrannical actions of public officers. Our forefathers saw the need for such protection when they gave us the Bill of Rights as a safeguard against arbitrary government. But this is not enough today. We need more than protection of our rights against government; we need protection of our rights against private persons or groups, seeking to undermine them.

There are several reasons why we believe the federal government must play a leading role in our efforts as a nation to improve our civil rights record.

First, many of the most serious wrongs against individual rights are committed by private persons or by local public officers. In the most flagrant of all such wrongs -- lynching -- private individuals, aided upon occasion by state or local officials, are the ones who take the law into their own hands and deprive the victim of his life. The very fact that these outrages continue to occur, coupled with the fact that the states have been unable to eliminate them, points clearly to a strong need for federal safeguards.

Second, it is a sound policy to use the idealism and prestige of our whole people to check the wayward tendencies of a part of them. It is true that the conscience of a nation is colored by the moral sense of its local communities. Still, the American people have traditionally shown high national regard for civil rights, even though the record in many a community has been far from good. We should not fail to make use of this in combating civil rights violations. The local community must be encouraged to set its own house in order. But the need for leadership is pressing. That leadership is available in the national government and it should be used. We cannot afford to delay action until the most backward community has learned to prize civil liberty and has taken adequate steps to safeguard the rights of every one of its citizens.

The Committee rejects the argument that governmental controls are themselves necessarily threats to liberty. This statement overlooks the fact that freedom in a civilized society is always founded on law enforced by government. Freedom in the absence of law is anarchy…

> [W]e have a moral reason, an economic reason, and an international reason for believing that the time for action is now.

\*The Moral Reason*

We have considered the American heritage of freedom at some length. We need no further justification for a broad and immediate program than the need to reaffirm our faith in the traditional American morality. The pervasive gap between our aims and what we actually do is creating a kind of moral dry rot which eats away at the emotional and rational bases of democratic beliefs. There are times when the difference between what we preach about civil rights and what we practice is shockingly illustrated by individual outrages. There are times when the whole structure of our ideology is made ridiculous by individual instances. And there are certain continuing, quiet, omnipresent practices which do irreparable damage to our beliefs.

As examples of "moral erosion" there are the consequences of suffrage limitations in the South. The fact that Negroes and many whites have not been allowed to vote in some states has actually sapped the morality underlying universal suffrage. Many men in public and private life do not believe that those who have been kept from voting are capable of self rule. They finally convince themselves that disfranchised people do not really have the right to vote.
Wartime segregation in the armed forces is another instance of how a social pattern may wreak moral havoc. Practically all white officers and enlisted men in all branches of service saw Negro military personnel performing only the most menial functions. They saw Negroes recruited for the common defense treated as men apart and distinct from themselves. As a result, men who might otherwise have maintained the equalitarian morality of their forebears were given reason to look down on their fellow citizens. This has been sharply illustrated by the Army study discussed previously, in which white servicemen expressed great surprise at the excellent performance of Negroes who joined them in the firing line. Even now, very few people know of the successful experiment with integrated combat units. Yet it is important in explaining why some Negro troops did not do well; it is proof that equal treatment can produce equal performance...

It is impossible to decide who suffers the greatest moral damage from our civil rights transgressions, because all of us are hurt. That is certainly true of those who are victimized. Their belief in the basic truth of the American promise is undermined. But they do have the realization, galling as it sometimes is, of being morally in the right. The damage to those who are responsible for these violations of our moral standards may well be greater. They, too, have been reared to honor the command of "free and equal." And all of us must share in the shame at the growth of hypocrisies like the "automatic" marble champion. All of us must endure the cynicism about democratic values which our failures breed.

The Economic Reason

One of the principal economic problems facing us and the rest of the world is achieving maximum production and continued prosperity. The loss of a huge, potential market for goods is a direct result of the economic discrimination which is practiced against many of our minority groups. A sort of vicious circle is produced. Discrimination depresses the wages and income of minority groups. As a result, their purchasing power is curtailed and markets are reduced. Reduced markets result in reduced production. This cuts down employment, which of course means lower wages and still fewer job opportunities. Rising fear, prejudice, and insecurity aggravate the very discrimination in employment which sets the vicious circle in motion. Minority groups are not the sole victims of this economic waste; its impact is inevitably felt by the entire population.

The International Reason

Our position in the postwar world is so vital to the future that our smallest actions have far-reaching effects. We have come to know that our own security in a highly interdependent world is inextricably tied to the security and well-being of all people and all countries. Our foreign policy is designed to make the United States an enormous, positive influence for peace and progress throughout the world. We have tried to let nothing, not even extreme political differences between ourselves and foreign nations, stand in the way of this goal. But our domestic civil rights shortcomings are a serious obstacle.

We cannot escape the fact that our civil rights record has been an issue in world politics. The world's press and radio are full of it. This Committee has seen a multitude of samples. We and our friends have been, and are, stressing our achievements. Those with competing philosophies have stressed -- and are shamelessly distorting -- our shortcomings. They have not only tried to create hostility toward us among specific nations, races, and religious groups. They have tried to prove our democracy an empty fraud, and our nation a consistent oppressor of underprivileged people. This may seem ludicrous to Americans, but it is sufficiently important to worry our friends...

The international reason for acting to secure our civil rights now is not to win the approval of our totalitarian critics. We would not expect it if our record were spotless; to them our civil rights record is only a convenient weapon with which to attack us. Certainly we would like to deprive them of that weapon. But we are more concerned with the good opinion of the peoples of the world. Our achievements in building and maintaining a state dedicated to the fundamentals of freedom have already served as a guide for those seeking the best road from chaos to liberty and prosperity. But it is not indelibly written that democracy will encompass the world. We are convinced that our way of life -- the free way of life -- holds a promise of hope for all people. We have what is perhaps the greatest responsibility ever placed upon a people to keep this promise alive. Only still greater achievements will do it.

The United States is not so strong, the final triumph of the democratic ideal is not so inevitable that we can ignore what the world thinks of us or our record.
Senator Joseph McCarthy, Speech Delivered in Wheeling, West Virginia, February 9, 1950

Today we are engaged in a final, all-out battle between communistic atheism and Christianity. The modern champions of communism have selected this as the time. And, ladies and gentlemen, the chips are down—they are truly down...

Ladies and gentlemen, can there be anyone here tonight who is so blind as to say that the war is not on? Can there be anyone who fails to realize that the Communist world has said, “The time is now” that this is the time for the show-down between the democratic Christian world and the Communist atheistic world? Unless we face this fact, we shall pay the price that must be paid by those who wait too long.

Six years ago, at the time of the first conference to map out the peace—Dumbarton Oaks—there was within the Soviet orbit 180,000,000 people. Lined up on the antitotalitarian side there were in the world at that time roughly 1,625,000,000 people. Today, only 6 years later, there are 800,000,000 people under the absolute domination of Soviet Russia—an increase of over 400 percent. On our side, the figure has shrunk to around 500,000,000. In other words, in less than 6 years the odds have changed from 9 to 1 in our favor to 8 to 5 against us. This indicates the swiftness of the tempo of Communist victories and American defeats in the cold war. As one of our outstanding historical figures once said, “When a great democracy is destroyed, it will not be because of enemies from without, but rather because of enemies from within.”

The truth of this statement is becoming terrifyingly clear as we see this country each day losing on every front. At war’s end we were physically the strongest nation on earth and, at least potentially, the most powerful intellectually and morally. Ours could have been the honor of being a beacon in the desert of destruction, a shining living proof that civilization was not yet ready to destroy itself. Unfortunately, we have failed miserably and tragically to arise to the opportunity.

The reason why we find ourselves in a position of impotency is not because our only powerful potential enemy has sent men to invade our shores, but rather because of the traitorous actions of those who have been treated so well by this Nation. It has not been the less fortunate or members of minority groups who have been selling this Nation out, but rather those who have had all the benefits that the wealthiest nation on earth has had to offer—the finest homes, the finest college education, and the finest jobs in Government we can give.

This is glaringly true in the State Department. There the bright young men who are born with silver spoons in their mouths are the ones who have been worst...

I have in my hand 57 cases of individuals who would appear to be either card carrying members or certainly loyal to the Communist Party, but who nevertheless are still helping to shape our foreign policy.

One thing to remember in discussing the Communists in our government is that we are not dealing with spies who get 30 pieces of silver to steal the blueprints of a new weapon. We are dealing with a far more sinister type of activity because it permits the enemy to guide and shape our policy... .

The FBI, I may add, has done an outstanding job, as all persons in Washington, Democrats and Republicans alike, agree. If [FBI director] J. Edgar Hoover had a free hand, we would not be plagued by Hisses... . in high positions of power in the State Department. The FBI has only power to investigate. . . .

I know that you are saying to yourself, “Well, why doesn’t the Congress do something about it?” Actually, ladies and gentlemen, one of the important reasons for the graft, the corruption, the dishonesty, the disloyalty, the treason in high Government positions—one of the most important reasons why this continues is a lack of moral uprising on the part of the 140,000,000 American people. In the light of history, however, this is not hard to explain.

It is the result of an emotional hang-over and a temporary moral lapse which follows every war. It is the apathy to evil which people who have been subjected to the tremendous evils of war feel. As the people of the world see mass murder, the destruction of defenseless and innocent people, and all of the crime and lack of morals which go with war, they become numb and apathetic. It has always been thus after war.
However, the morals of our people have not been destroyed. They still exist. This cloak of numbness and apathy has only needed a spark to rekindle them. Happily, this spark has finally been supplied.

As you know, very recently the Secretary of State [Dean Acheson] proclaimed his loyalty to a man guilty of what has always been considered as the most abominable of all crimes—of being a traitor to the people who gave him a position of great trust. The Secretary of State in attempting to justify his continued devotion to the man who sold out the Christian world to the atheistic world, referred to Christ’s Sermon on the Mount as a justification and reason therefor, and the reaction of the American people to this would have made the heart of Abraham Lincoln happy.

When this pompous diplomat in striped pants, with a phony British accent, proclaimed to the American people that Christ on the Mount endorsed communism, high treason, and betrayal of a sacred trust, the blasphemy was so great that it awakened the dormant indignation of the American people.

He has lighted the spark which is resulting in a moral uprising and will end only when the whole sorry mess of twisted, warped thinkers are swept from the national scene so that we may have a new birth of national honesty and decency in Government.
Increasingly, Congress is concerned with the eradication of disloyalty and the defense of Americanism, and scarcely a day passes... that the outlines of the new loyalty and the new Americanism are not etched more sharply in public policy... In the making is a revival of the red hysteria of the early 1920s, one of the shabbiest chapters in the history of American democracy, and more than a revival, for the new crusade is designed not merely to frustrate Communism but to formulate a positive definition of Americanism, and a positive concept of loyalty.

What is this new loyalty? It is, above all, conformity. It is the uncritical and unquestioning acceptance of America as it is—the political institutions, the social relationships, the economic practices. It rejects inquiry into the race question or socialized medicine, or public housing, or into the wisdom or validity of our foreign policy. It regards as particularly heinous any challenge to what is called "the system of private enterprise," identifying that system with Americanism. It abandons... the once popular concept of progress, and regards America as a finished product, perfect and complete.

It is, it must be added, easily satisfied. For it wants not intellectual conviction nor spiritual conquest, but mere outward conformity. In matters of loyalty, it takes the word for the deed, the gesture for the principle. It is content with the flag salute... It is satisfied with membership in respectable organizations and, as it assumes that every member of a liberal organization is a Communist, concludes that every member of a conservative one is a true American. It has not yet learned that not everyone who saith Lord, Lord shall enter into the kingdom of Heaven. It is designed neither to discover real disloyalty nor to foster true loyalty...

The concept of loyalty as conformity is a false one. It is narrow and restrictive, denies freedom of thought and of conscience, and is irremediably stained by private and selfish considerations...

What do men know of loyalty who make a mockery of the Declaration of Independence and the Bill of Rights, whose energies are dedicated to stirring up race and class hatreds, who would strait-jacket the American spirit? What indeed do they know of America—the America of Sam Adams and Tom Paine, of Jackson's defiance of the Court and Lincoln's celebration of labor, of Thoreau's essay on Civil Disobedience and Emerson's championship of John Brown, of the America of the Fourierists and the Come-Outers, of cranks and fanatics, of socialists and anarchists? Who among American heroes could meet their tests, who would be cleared by their committees? Not Washington, who was a rebel. Not Jefferson, who wrote that all men are created equal and whose motto was "rebellion to tyrants is obedience to God." Not Garrison, who publicly burned the Constitution; or Wendell Phillips, who spoke for the underprivileged everywhere and counted himself a philosophical anarchist; not Seward of the Higher Law or Sumner of racial equality. Not Lincoln, who admonished us to have malice toward none, charity for all; or Wilson, who warned that our flag was "a flag of liberty of opinion as well as of political liberty"; or Justice Holmes...

Who are those who are really disloyal? Those who inflame racial hatreds, who sow religious and class dissensions. Those who subvert the Constitution by violating the freedom of the ballot box. Those who make a mockery of majority rule by the use of the filibuster. Those who impair democracy by denying equal educational facilities. Those who frustrate justice by lynch law or by making a farce of jury trials. Those who deny freedom of speech and of the press and of assembly. Those who press for special favors against the interest of the commonwealth. Those who regard public office as a source of private gain. Those who would exalt the military over the civil. Those who for selfish and private purposes stir up national antagonisms and expose the world to the ruin of war.

Will the House Committee on Un-American Activities interfere with the activities of these? Will Mr. Truman's disloyalty proclamation reach these? Will the current campaigns for Americanism convert these? If past experience is any guide, they will not. What they will do, if they are successful, is to silence criticism, stamp out dissent—or drive it underground. But if our democracy is to flourish it must have criticism, if our government is to function it must have dissent. Only totalitarian governments insist upon conformity and they—as we know—do so at their peril. Without criticism abuses will go unrebuked; without dissent our dynamic system will become static.
Herblock, “You Read Books, Eh?” (1949)

The Red Iceberg (1960)
Clark Kerr, *Industrialism and Industrial Man* (1960)

The industrial society is necessarily characterized by a substantial range and scale of activities by the government. In a society of advanced technology there are, by virtue of this technology, a larger number of activities for government; for instance, the need for roads and highways, the provision for airports, the regulation of traffic, radio and television, a result of modern means of communication. Urban development has the same consequences. Technology also creates a more complex problem for a military establishment, extending in many directions the activities of government. The more integrated character of the world increases the activities significant to international relations and hence typically the scope of government activities. The scale of some scientific applications and the capital needs of new technologies tend to increase the scope of public agencies. As income rises, the demand of consumers may be for services largely provided by governments, such as education, parks, roads and health services.

The industrial society and individual freedom, however, are not necessarily to be regarded as antagonists. A high degree of discipline in the work place imposed by a web of rules and a large range of governmental activities is fully consistent with a larger freedom for the individual in greater leisure, a greater range of choice in occupations and place of residence, a greater range of alternatives in goods and services on which to use income, and a very wide range of subgroups or associations in which to choose participation. It is a mistake to regard the industrial society as antithetical to individual freedom by citing ways in which the scope of public and private governments has increased without also noting ways in which the industrial society expands individual freedom...

The individual will be in a mixed situation far removed either from that of the independent farmer organizing most aspects of his own life or from that of the Chinese in the commune under total surveillance. In his working life he will be subject to great conformity imposed not only by the enterprise manager but also by the state and by his own occupational association. For most people, any true scope for the independent spirit on the job will be missing. However, the skilled worker, while under rules, does get some control over his job, some chance to organize it as he sees fit, some possession of it...

Outside his working life the individual may have more freedom under pluralistic industrialism than in most earlier forms of society. Politically he can be given some influence. Society has achieved consensus and it is perhaps less necessary for Big Brother to exercise political control. Nor in this Brave New World need genetic and chemical means be employed to avoid revolt. There will not be any revolt, anyway, except little bureaucratic revolts that can be handled piecemeal. An educated population will want political choice and can be given it...

The great new freedom may come in the leisure of individuals. Higher standards of living, more leisure, more education make this not only possible but almost inevitable. This will be the happy hunting ground for the independent spirit. Along with the bureaucratic conservatism of economic and political life may well go a New Bohemianism in the other aspects of life and partly as a reaction to the confining nature of the productive side of society. There may well come a new search for individuality and a new meaning to liberty. The economic system may be highly ordered and the political system barren ideologically; but the social and recreational and cultural aspects of life diverse and changing...

Utopia never arrives, but men may well settle for the benefits of a greater scope for freedom in their personal lives at the cost of considerable conformity in their working lives.
C. Wright Mills, *The Sociological Imagination* (1959)

*Mills was a sociologist who was critical of 1950s society and industry.*

Freedom is not merely the chance to do as one pleases; neither is it merely the opportunity to choose between set alternatives. Freedom is, first of all, the chance to formulate the available choices, to argue over them—and then, the opportunity to choose. That is why freedom cannot exist without an enlarged role of human reason in human affairs. Within an individual's biography and within a society's history, the social task of reason is to formulate choices, to enlarge the scope of human decisions in the making of history. The future of human affairs is not merely some set of variables to be predicted. The future is what is to be decided-within the limits, to be sure, of historical possibility. But this possibility is not fixed; in our time the limits seem very broad indeed.

Beyond this, the problem of freedom is the problem of how decisions about the future of human affairs are to be made and who is to make them. Organizationally, it is the problem of a just machinery of decision. Morally, it is the problem of political responsibility. Intellectually, it is the problem of what are now the possible futures of human affairs. But the larger aspects of the problem of freedom today concern not only the nature of history and the structural chance for explicit decisions to make a difference in its course; they concern also the nature of man and the fact that the value of freedom cannot be based upon man's basic nature. The ultimate problem of freedom is the problem of the cheerful robot, and it arises in this form today because today it has become evident to us that all men do not naturally want to be free; that all men are not willing or not able, as the case may be, to exert themselves to acquire the reason that freedom requires.

Under what conditions do men come to want to be free and capable of acting freely? Under what conditions are they willing and able to bear the burdens freedom does impose and to see these less as burdens than as gladly undertaken self-transformations? And on the negative side: Can men be made to want to become cheerful robots?

In our time, must we not face the possibility that the human mind as a social fact might be deteriorating in quality and cultural level, and yet not many would notice it because of the overwhelming accumulation of technological gadgets? Is not that one meaning of rationality without reason? Of human alienation? Of the absence of any free role for reason in human affairs? The accumulation of gadgets hides these meanings: Those who use these devices do not understand them; those who invent them do not understand much else. That is why we may not, without great ambiguity, use technological abundance as the index of human quality and cultural progress.

The suburban housewife--she was the dream image of the young American women and the envy, it was said, of women all over the world. The American housewife--freed by science and labor-saving appliances from the drudgery, the dangers of childbirth and the illnesses of her grandmother. She was healthy, beautiful, educated, concerned only about her husband, her children, her home. She had found true feminine fulfillment. As a housewife and mother, she was respected as a full and equal partner to man in his world. She was free to choose automobiles, clothes, appliances, supermarkets; she had everything that women ever dreamed of.

In the fifteen years after World War II, this mystique of feminine fulfillment became the cherished and self-perpetuating core of contemporary American culture. Millions of women lived their lives in the image of those pretty pictures of the American suburban housewife, kissing their husbands goodbye in front of the picture window, depositing their station wagons full of children at school, and smiling as they ran the new electric waxer over the spotless kitchen floor. They baked their own bread, sewed their own and their children's clothes, kept their new washing machines and dryers running all day. They changed the sheets on the beds twice a week instead of once, took the rug hoolag class in adult education, and pitied their poor frustrated mothers, who had dreamed of having a career. Their only dream was to be perfect wives and mothers; their highest ambition to have five children and a beautiful house, their only fight to get and keep their husbands. They had no thought for the unfeminine problems of the world outside the home; they wanted the men to make the major decisions. They gloried in their role as women, and wrote proudly on the census blank: "Occupation: housewife."

For over fifteen years, the words written for women, and the words women used when they talked to each other, while their husbands sat on the other side of the room and talked shop or politics or septic tanks, were about problems with their children, or how to keep their husbands happy, or improve their children's school, or cook chicken or make slipcovers. Nobody argued whether women were inferior or superior to men; they were simply different. Words like "emancipation" and "career" sounded strange and embarrassing; no one had used them for years...

If a woman had a problem in the 1950's and 1960's, she knew that something must be wrong with her marriage, or with herself. Other women were satisfied with their lives, she thought. What kind of a woman was she if she did not feel this mysterious fulfillment waxing the kitchen floor? She was so ashamed to admit her dissatisfaction that she never knew how many other women shared it. If she tried to tell her husband, he didn't understand what she was talking about. She did not really understand it herself.

For over fifteen years women in America found it harder to talk about the problem than about sex. Even the psychoanalysts had no name for it. When a woman went to a psychiatrist for help, as many women did, she would say, "I'm so ashamed," or "I must be hopelessly neurotic." "I don't know what's wrong with women today," a suburban psychiatrist said uneasily. "I only know something is wrong because most of my patients happen to be women. And their problem isn't sexual." Most women with this problem did not go to see a psychoanalyst, however. "There's nothing wrong really," they kept telling themselves, "There isn't any problem."

But on an April morning in 1959, I heard a mother of four, having coffee with four other mothers in a suburban development fifteen miles from New York, say in a tone of quiet desperation, "the problem." And the others knew, without words, that she was not talking about a problem with her husband, or her children, or her home. Suddenly they realized they all shared the same problem, the problem that has no name. They began, hesitantly, to talk about it. Later, after they had picked up their children at nursery school and taken them home to nap, two of the women cried, in sheer relief, just to know they were not alone.

Gradually I came to realize that the problem that has no name was shared by countless women in America. As a magazine writer I often interviewed women about problems with their children, or their marriages, or their houses, or their communities. But after a while I began to recognize the telltale signs of this other problem. I saw the same signs in suburban ranch houses and split-levels on Long Island and in New Jersey and Westchester County; in colonial houses in a small Massachusetts town; on patios in Memphis; in suburban and city apartments; in living rooms in the Midwest. Sometimes I sensed the problem, not as a reporter, but as a suburban housewife, for during this
time I was also bringing up my own three children in Rockland County, New York. I heard echoes of the problem in college dormitories and semiprivate maternity wards, at PTA meetings and luncheons of the League of Women Voters, at suburban cocktail parties, in station wagons waiting for trains, and in snatches of conversation overheard at Schrafft's. The groping words I heard from other women, on quiet afternoons when children were at school or on quiet evenings when husbands worked late, I think I understood first as a woman long before I understood their larger social and psychological implications.

Just what was this problem that has no name? What were the words women used when they tried to express it? Sometimes a woman would say "I feel empty somehow . . . incomplete." Or she would say, "I feel as if I don't exist." Sometimes she blotted out the feeling with a tranquilizer. Sometimes she thought the problem was with her husband or her children, or that what she really needed was to redecorate her house, or move to a better neighborhood, or have an affair, or another baby. Sometimes, she went to a doctor with symptoms she could hardly describe: "A tired feeling. . . I get so angry with the children it scares me . . . I feel like crying without any reason." (A Cleveland doctor called it "the housewife's syndrome.") A number of women told me about great bleeding blisters that break out on their hands and arms. "I call it the housewife's blight" said a family doctor in Pennsylvania. "I see it so often lately in these young women with four, five and six children who bury themselves in their dishpans. But it isn't caused by detergent and it isn't cured by cortisone."

Sometimes a woman would tell me that the feeling gets so strong she runs out of the house and walks through the streets. Or she stays inside her house and cries. Or her children tell her a joke, and she doesn't laugh because she doesn't hear it. I talked to women who had spent years on the analyst's couch, working out their "adjustment to the feminine role," their blocks to "fulfillment as a wife and mother." But the desperate tone in these women's voices, and the look in their eyes, was the same as the tone and the look of other women, who were sure they had no problem, even though they did have a strange feeling of desperation.

A mother of four who left college at nineteen to get married told me: I've tried everything women are supposed to do--hobbies, gardening, pickling, canning, being very social with my neighbors, joining committees, running PTA teas. I can do it all, and I like it, but it doesn't leave you anything to think about--any feeling of who you are. I never had any career ambitions. All I wanted was to get married and have four children. I love the kids and Bob and my home. There's no problem you can even put a name to. But I'm desperate. I begin to feel I have no personality. I'm a server of food and putter-on of pants and a bed maker, somebody who can be called on when you want something. But who am I?

A twenty-three-year-old mother in blue jeans said: I ask myself why I'm so dissatisfied. I've got my health, fine children, a lovely new home, enough money. My husband has a real future as an electronics engineer. He doesn't have any of these feelings. He says maybe I need a vacation, let's go to New York for a weekend. But that isn't it. I always had this idea we should do everything together. I can't sit down and read a book alone. If the children are napping and I have one hour to myself I just walk through the house waiting for them to wake up. I don't make a move until I know where the rest of the crowd is going. It's as if ever since you were a little girl, there's always been somebody or something that will take care of your life: your parents, or college, or falling in love, or having a child, or moving to a new house. Then you wake up one morning and there's nothing to look forward to.

A young wife in a Long Island development said: I seem to sleep so much. I don't know why I should be so tired. This house isn't nearly so hard to clean as the cold-water flat we had when I was working. The children are at school all day. It's not the work. I just don't feel alive.
The Southern Manifesto,” Congressional Record, 84th Congress Second Session. Vol. 102, part 4 (March 12, 1956)

The unwarranted decision of the Supreme Court in the public school cases is now bearing the fruit always produced when men substitute naked power for established law.

The Founding Fathers gave us a Constitution of checks and balances because they realized the inescapable lesson of history that no man or group of men can be safely entrusted with unlimited power. They framed this Constitution with its provisions for change by amendment in order to secure the fundamentals of government against the dangers of temporary popular passion or the personal predilections of public officeholders.

We regard the decisions of the Supreme Court in the school cases as a clear abuse of judicial power. It climaxes a trend in the Federal Judiciary undertaking to legislate, in derogation of the authority of Congress, and to encroach upon the reserved rights of the States and the people.

The original Constitution does not mention education. Neither does the 14th Amendment nor any other amendment. The debates preceding the submission of the 14th Amendment clearly show that there was no intent that it should affect the system of education maintained by the States.

The very Congress which proposed the amendment subsequently provided for segregated schools in the District of Columbia.

When the amendment was adopted in 1868, there were 37 States of the Union. Every one of the 26 States that had any substantial racial differences among its people, either approved the operation of segregated schools already in existence or subsequently established such schools by action of the same law-making body which considered the 14th Amendment.

As admitted by the Supreme Court in the public school case (Brown v. Board of Education), the doctrine of separate but equal schools "apparently originated in Roberts v. City of Boston (1849), upholding school segregation against attack as being violative of a State constitutional guarantee of equality." This constitutional doctrine began in the North, not in the South, and it was followed not only in Massachusetts, but in Connecticut, New York, Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Minnesota, New Jersey, Ohio, Pennsylvania and other northern states until they, exercising their rights as states through the constitutional processes of local self-government, changed their school systems.

In the case of Plessy v. Ferguson in 1896 the Supreme Court expressly declared that under the 14th Amendment no person was denied any of his rights if the States provided separate but equal facilities. This decision has been followed in many other cases. It is notable that the Supreme Court, speaking through Chief Justice Taft, a former President of the United States, unanimously declared in 1927 in Lum v. Rice that the "separate but equal" principle is "within the discretion of the State in regulating its public schools and does not conflict with the 14th Amendment."

This interpretation, restated time and again, became a part of the life of the people of many of the States and confirmed their habits, traditions, and way of life. It is founded on elemental humanity and commonsense, for parents should not be deprived by Government of the right to direct the lives and education of their own children.

Though there has been no constitutional amendment or act of Congress changing this established legal principle almost a century old, the Supreme Court of the United States, with no legal basis for such action, undertook to exercise their naked judicial power and substituted their personal political and social ideas for the established law of the land.

This unwarranted exercise of power by the Court, contrary to the Constitution, is creating chaos and confusion in the States principally affected. It is destroying the amicable relations between the white and Negro races that have been created through 90 years of patient effort by the good people of both races. It has planted hatred and suspicion where there has been heretofore friendship and understanding.

Without regard to the consent of the governed, outside mediators are threatening immediate and revolutionary changes in our public schools systems. If done, this is certain to destroy the system of public education in some of the States.
With the gravest concern for the explosive and dangerous condition created by this decision and inflamed by outside meddlers:

We reaffirm our reliance on the Constitution as the fundamental law of the land.

We decry the Supreme Court's encroachment on the rights reserved to the States and to the people, contrary to established law, and to the Constitution.

We commend the motives of those States which have declared the intention to resist forced integration by any lawful means.

We appeal to the States and people who are not directly affected by these decisions to consider the constitutional principles involved against the time when they too, on issues vital to them may be the victims of judicial encroachment.

Even though we constitute a minority in the present Congress, we have full faith that a majority of the American people believe in the dual system of government which has enabled us to achieve our greatness and will in time demand that the reserved rights of the States and of the people be made secure against judicial usurpation.

We pledge ourselves to use all lawful means to bring about a reversal of this decision which is contrary to the Constitution and to prevent the use of force in its implementation.

In this trying period, as we all seek to right this wrong, we appeal to our people not to be provoked by the agitators and troublemakers invading our States and to scrupulously refrain from disorder and lawless acts.


Elsewhere throughout the South, violence has coursed through community after community, like a dirty creek through a Southern mill town. In Biloxi, Miss., whites used dog chains and, later, shotguns on Negroes who showed up at a segregated public beach; in Portsmouth, Va., they armed themselves with hammers; in Montgomery, Ala., they swung baseball bats.

The crisis of law and order is so real, so immediate, that it calls for a new look at what has been the nation’s approach to, and its responsibility in, the Southern racial problem.

That approach has been gradualism: slow and evolutionary change. But when looked at against today’s urgencies, gradualism shapes up as a failure, and for very good, but often misunderstood, ethnic and historic reasons. When the evidence is weighed today, gradualism not only looks wrong, but also appears to have been mistaken in intent.

Gradualism is deeply ingrained in the American tradition, and Americans outside the South, recent surveys show, are reluctant to believe that gradual social change isn’t the best way to solve the South’s problems.

But the simple logic of the future of Southern race relations is that somebody outside the South is going to have to intervene. That intervention will almost certainly have to come from the Federal Government.

The question that remains is whether the Government will intervene after damage is done, including perhaps serious international damage to America’s prestige, or whether national public opinion will support positive and constructive steps of prevention.

The persistent American image of the South’s situation is that there are two extreme sides, with a happy middle ground between them and that this middle ground must be occupied in the South, as it is almost everywhere else in the U.S., by people who are essentially moral and law-abiding…
In April, Newsweek conducted a poll to see “how other Americans feel” about the South and its problems. It concluded, “The prevailing view among opinion leaders is one of understanding and sympathy. From California to Maine, men recognize that decades of strict social custom in the South cannot be overturned quickly.”

But the answer from the young Negro college students in the South is plain. “Mr. Local Custom Must Die,” read a placard carried by one of them in a recent demonstration.

If there is a lesson in the current racial crisis, it is that the Southern climate is not democratic, and that gradualism will not work there because the essentials of gradualism—a flexible society in which competing claims are freely heard and fairly adjusted—do not exist.

In the first place, the Negro’s claims for his legal and constitutional rights, not to mention economic opportunity and personal dignity, have run into a stone wall of denial and defiance from the white South.

In the decade and a half since World War II, the Southern Negro has pressed his claims through the courts, in the democratic tradition, only to win his suits and lose his case. Today, he is fed up with legalism.

“If you had spent as many thousands of hours in courts and administrative hearings, and in preparing briefs for them, as Negro leaders have, and for as little in return, you would be bitter too,” a Southern Negro attorney told me recently.

The crowning disappointment to the Negro, and the most disastrous failure of moderation, lies in the six-year history of enforcement, or lack of enforcement, of the 1954 U.S. Supreme Court decision on the schools. In the spring of 1960, six years after the Court handed down its ruling that racial segregation in schools is illegal, 94 per cent of the South’s Negro students were still attending segregated classes, according to the authoritative Southern Education Reporting Service…The cruelty this works on the handful of Negro children who are “integrated” is difficult for a white adult to imagine.

Many of the South’s most conservative and silent Negro adults are bitterly disappointed about the school-desegregation deadlock. “Maybe they didn’t expect to go to an integrated school when they were children,” a Negro preacher said, “but after the Supreme Court decision, they began to believe their children had that right.”

In allowing the South a year’s breathing spell after its initial decision, and in leaving implementation to Federal district judges, the Court showed that it believed the South deserved time, and would use the time well. But it didn’t work out that way.

A perceptive Southern newspaperman described what happened: “Everybody was in shock for a few weeks immediately after the decision. Many people concerned with government or schools were convinced the time had come. They thought they were going to have to comply. Many school superintendents went right ahead with plans for integration. If the Court had ordered Southern school systems to submit plans within 12 months, all, or all but a few, would have done so.” Then, legislatures erected new legal barriers and delay followed delay…

One of the least understood facts about the South is that there is a wider atmosphere of professed acquiescence there than few people outside the region realize. In the country clubs, on the terraces, in the new ranch-house living rooms where middle- and upper-class Southerners gather, there is general agreement that “the Negro’s got to make some progress,” or “something has got to give” or “someday we’ve got to integrate the schools.” It has almost become a matter of class status to say: “As far as I’m concerned, I wouldn’t care if they integrated tomorrow.” Thus, the upper-class Southerner distinguishes himself from the lower-class white person—whose principal characteristic in the past has always been his overt hatred for the Negro.

Middle-class whites—ministers, teachers, professionals—say it is not prejudice that holds them back but practicality. “There’d be trouble,” they say. What they do not say, and would not admit, is that they are as much in bondage as the Negro himself. In the past, when members of this class have let their consciences guide them into attempts to change the status quo, reprisal has been visited on them just as effectively, if not as violently, as it has on the Negro himself.
Time has little to do with their attitudes or their behavior. They are simply disenfranchised, caught in the grip of an archaic, rigid and oversimplified power structure welded long ago specifically to fight off all changes in the racial situation…

From my own observations on my recent trip, three realities must be faced: that racial discrimination is the number-one social problem of this decade in American life; that the situation is now in a deadly and dangerous stalemate and that the only agency that can do anything meaningful at this juncture is the Federal Government.

In the opinion of many Negro Southerners with whom I have recently talked, the most important step the Federal Government can take is to create new job opportunities for Negroes. Ample authority exists now in its statutes and executive orders for the Government to start hiring Negroes immediately on an equal basis in all Federal installations and to insist that Negroes be hired by all companies holding Federal contracts…

What especially angers Negroes is that Federal aid is often given to segregated facilities—where the Negro’s tax money is used for facilities that are closed to him. For instance, monies provided under the Hill-Burton Act for building rural hospitals, find their way into urban hospital construction. Yet, of the 4,000 hospital beds in Atlanta, only 430 are open to Negroes, exclusive of 250 beds in private Negro hospitals. Many other forms of Federal aid are put to as unfortunately disproportionate use in the South.
Colonel Robert D. Heinl Jr., “The Collapse of the Armed Forces,”

By every conceivable indicator, our army that now remains in Vietnam is in a state approaching collapse, with individual units avoiding or having refused combat, murdering their officers and noncommissioned officers, drug-ridden, and dispirited where not near-mutinous.

Intolerably clobbered and buffeted from without and within by social turbulence, pandemic drug addiction, race war, sedition, civilian scapegoatise, draftee recalcitrance and malevolence, barracks theft and common crime, unsupported in their travail by the general government, in Congress as well as the executive branch, distrusted, disliked, and often reviled by the public, the uniformed services today are places of agony for the loyal, silent professionals who doggedly hang on and try to keep the ship afloat.

To understand the military consequences of what is happening to the U.S. Armed Forces, Vietnam is a good place to start. It is in Vietnam that the rear-guard of a 500,000-man army, in its day (and in the observation of the writer) the best army the United States ever put into the field, is numbly extricating itself from a nightmare war the Armed Forces feel they had foisted on them by bright civilians who are now back on campus writing books about the folly of it all.

“They have set up separate companies,” writes an American soldier from Cu Chi, “for men who refuse to go out into the field. It is no big thing to refuse to go. If a man is ordered to go to such and such a place he no longer goes through the hassle of refusing; he just packs his shirt and goes to visit some buddies at another base camp. Operations have become incredibly ragtag. Many guys don’t even put on their uniforms any more.” The American garrisons on the larger bases are virtually disarmed. The lifers have taken our weapons from us and put them under lock and key. There have also been quite a few frag incidents in the battalion.”

Can all this really be typical or even truthful? Unfortunately the answer is yes.

“Frag incidents” or just “fragging” is current soldier slang in Vietnam for the murder or attempted murder of strict, unpopular, or just aggressive officers and noncommissioned officers. With extreme reluctance (after a young West Pointer from Senator Mike Mansfield’s Montana was fragged in his sleep) the Pentagon has now disclosed that fraggings in 1970 (209) have more than doubled those of the previous year (96).

Word of the deaths of officers will bring cheers at troop movies or in bivouacs of certain units. In one such division fraggings during 1971 have been authoritatively estimated to be running about one a week.

Bounties, raised by common subscription in amounts running anywhere from $50 to $1,000, have been widely reported put on the heads of leaders whom the privates . . . want to rub out.

Shortly after the costly assault on Hamburger Hill in mid-1969, the GI underground newspaper in Vietnam, GI Says, publicly offered a $10,000 bounty on LCol Weldon Honeycutt, the officer who ordered (and led) the attack. Despite several attempts, however, Honeycutt managed to live out his tour and return Stateside.

“Another Hamburger Hill” (i.e., toughly contested assault), conceded a veteran major, “is definitely out.”

“Search and evade” (meaning tacit avoidance of combat by units in the field) is now virtually a principle of war, vividly expressed by the GI phrase, “CYA (cover your ass) and get home!”

That “search-and-evasive” has not gone unnoticed by the enemy is underscored by the Viet Cong delegation’s recent statement at the Paris Peace Talks that communist units in Indochina have been ordered not to engage American units which do not molest them. The same statement boasted—not without foundation in fact—that American defectors are in the VC ranks.

Symbolic antiwar fasts (such as the one at Pleiku where an entire medical unit, led by its officers, refused Thanksgiving turkey), peace symbols,
“V”-signs not for victory but for peace, booing and cursing of officers and even of hapless entertainers such as Bob Hope, are unhappily commonplace.

As for drugs and race, Vietnam’s problems today not only reflect but reinforce those of the Armed Forces as a whole. In April, for example, members of a Congressional investigating subcommittee reported that 10 to 15% of our troops in Vietnam are now using high-grade heroin, and that drug addiction there is “of epidemic proportions.”

It is a truism that national armies closely reflect societies from which they have been raised. It would be strange indeed if the Armed Forces did not today mirror the agonizing divisions and social traumas of American society, and of course they do.

For this very reason, our Armed Forces outside Vietnam not only reflect these conditions but disclose the depths of their troubles in an awful litany of sedition, disaffection, desertion, race, drugs, breakdowns of authority, abandonment of discipline, and, as a cumulative result, the lowest state of military morale in the history of the country.

Sedition—coupled with disaffection within the ranks, and externally fomented with an audacity and intensity previously inconceivable—infests the Armed Services…

Internally speaking, racial conflicts and drugs—also previously insignificant—are tearing the services apart today. . . .Racial conflicts (most but not all sparked by young black enlisted men) are erupting murderously in all services.

The drug problem—like the civilian situation from which it directly derives—is running away with the services. In March, Navy Secretary John H. Chafee, speaking for the two sea services, said bluntly that drug abuse in both the Navy and Marines is out of control. In 1966, the Navy discharged 170 drug offenders. Three years later (1969), 3,800 were discharged. Last year in 1970, the total jumped to over 5,000.

Drug abuse in the Pacific Fleet—with Asia on one side, and kinky California on the other—gives the Navy its worst headaches. To cite one example, a destroyer due to sail from the West Coast last year for the Far East nearly had to postpone deployment when, five days before departure, a ring of some 30 drug users (over 10 percent of the crew) was uncovered. . . .

What those statistics say is that the Armed Forces (like their parent society) are in the grip of a drug pandemic—a conclusion underscored by the one fact that, just since 1968, the total number of verified drug addiction cases throughout the Armed Forces has nearly doubled. One other yardstick: according to military medical sources, needle hepatitis now poses as great a problem among young soldiers as VD. . . .

With conditions what they are in the Armed Forces, and with intense efforts on the part of elements in our society to disrupt discipline and destroy morale the consequences can be clearly measured in two ultimate indicators: manpower retention (reenlistments and their antithesis, desertions); and the state of discipline.

In both respects the picture is anything but encouraging. . . . Desertion rates are going straight up. . . .

In 1970, the Army had 65,643 deserters, or roughly the equivalent of four infantry divisions. This desertion rate (52.3 soldiers per thousand) is well over twice the peak rate for Korea (22.5 per thousand). It is more than quadruple the 1966 desertion-rate (14.7 per thousand) of the then well-trained, high-spirited professional Army. . . .

Admiral Elmo R. Zumwalt, Jr., Chief of Naval Operations, minces no words. “We have a personnel crisis,” he recently said, “that borders on disaster.” . . .

The trouble of the services—produced by and also in turn producing the dismaying conditions described in this article—is above all a crisis of soul and backbone. It entails—the word is not too strong—something very near a collapse of the command authority and leadership George Washington saw as the soul of military forces. This collapse results, at least in part, from a concurrent collapse of public confidence in the military establishment.
Martin Luther King, Jr., Letter from Birmingham City Jail (1963)

My dear Fellow Clergymen,

While confined here in the Birmingham city jail, I came across your recent statement calling our present activities “unwise and untimely.” . . . Since I feel that you are men of genuine good will and your criticisms are sincerely set forth, I would like to answer your statement in what I hope will be patient and reasonable terms.

I am in Birmingham because injustice is here. . . . I cannot sit idly by in Atlanta and not be concerned about what happens in Birmingham. Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere. . . . You deplore the demonstrations that are presently taking place in Birmingham. But I am sorry that your statement did not express a similar concern for the conditions that brought the demonstrations into being. . . .

Birmingham is probably the most thoroughly segregated city in the United States. Its ugly record of police brutality is known in every section of this country. Its unjust treatment of Negroes in the courts is a notorious reality. There have been more unsolved bombings of Negro homes and churches in Birmingham than any city in this nation. These are the hard, brutal and unbelievable facts. . . .

You may well ask, “Why direct action? Why sit-ins, marches, etc.? Isn’t negotiation a better path?” You are exactly right in your call for negotiation. Indeed, this is the purpose of direct action. Nonviolent direct action seeks to create such a crisis and establish such creative tension that a community that has constantly refused to negotiate is forced to confront the issue. It seeks so to dramatize the issue that it can no longer be ignored. . . . So the purpose of the direct action is to create a situation so crisis-packed that it will inevitably open the door to negotiation. . . .

One of the basic points in your statement is that our acts are untimely. . . . My friends, I must say to you that we have not made a single gain in civil rights without determined legal and nonviolent pressure. History is the long and tragic story of the fact that privileged groups seldom give up their privileges voluntarily. . . .

We know through painful experience that freedom is never voluntarily given by the oppressor; it must be demanded by the oppressed. Frankly, I have never yet engaged in a direct action movement that was “well-timed,” according to the timetable of those who have not suffered unduly from the disease of segregation. For years now I have heard the words “Wait!” It rings in the ear of every Negro with a piercing familiarity. This “Wait” has almost always meant “Never.” . . .

We have waited for more than 340 years for our constitutional and God-given rights. The nations of Asia and Africa are moving with jetlike speed toward the goal of political independence, and we still creep at horse and buggy pace toward the gaining of a cup of coffee at a lunch counter. I guess it is easy for those who have never felt the stinging darts of segregation to say, “Wait.” But when you have seen vicious mobs lynch your mothers and fathers at will and drown your sisters and brothers at whim; when you have seen hate-filled policemen curse, kick, brutalize and even kill your black brothers and sisters with impunity; when you see the vast majority of your twenty million Negro brothers smothering in an airtight cage of poverty in the midst of an affluent society; when you suddenly find your tongue twisted and your speech stammering as you seek to explain to your six-year-old daughter why she can’t go to the public amusement park that has just been advertised on television, and see tears welling up in her little eyes when she is told that Funtown is closed to colored children, and see the depressing clouds of inferiority begin to form in her little mental sky, and see her begin to distort her little personality by unconsciously developing a bitterness toward white people; when you have to concoct an answer for a five-year-old son asking in agonizing pathos: “Daddy, why do white people treat colored people so mean?”; when you take a cross-country drive and find it necessary to sleep night after night in the uncomfortable corners of your automobile because no motel will accept you; when you are humiliating day in and day out by nagging signs reading “white” and “colored”; when your first name becomes “nigger” and your middle name becomes “boy” (however old you are) and your last name becomes “John,” and when your wife and mother are never given the respected title “Mrs.”; . . . then you will understand why we find it difficult to wait. There comes a time when the cup of endurance runs over, and men are no longer willing to be plunged into an abyss of injustice where they experience the blackness of corroding despair. I hope, sirs, you can understand our legitimate and unavoidable impatience.
You express a great deal of anxiety over our willingness to break laws. This is certainly a legitimate concern. Since we so diligently urge people to obey the Supreme Court’s decision of 1954 outlawing segregation in the public schools, it is rather strange and paradoxical to find us consciously breaking laws. One may well ask, “How can you advocate breaking some laws and obeying others?” The answer is found in the fact that there are two types of laws: there are just and there are unjust laws. I would agree with Saint Augustine that “An unjust law is no law at all.”

Now what is the difference between the two? How does one determine when a law is just or unjust? A just law is a man-made code that squares with the moral law or the law of God. An unjust law is a code that is out of harmony with the moral law. To put it in the terms of Saint Thomas Aquinas, an unjust law is a human law that is not rooted in eternal and natural law. Any law that uplifts human personality is just. Any law that degrades human personality is unjust. All segregation statutes are unjust because segregation distorts the soul and damages the personality. It gives the segregator a false sense of superiority, and the segregated a false sense of inferiority. . . . So segregation is not only politically, economically and sociologically unsound, but it is morally wrong and sinful. . . . So I can urge men to disobey segregation ordinances because they are morally wrong. . . .

I hope you can see the distinction I am trying to point out. In no sense do I advocate evading or defying the law as the rabid segregationist would do. This would lead to anarchy. One who breaks an unjust law must do it openly, lovingly . . . and with a willingness to accept the penalty. I submit that an individual who breaks a law that conscience tells him is unjust, and willingly accepts the penalty by staying in jail to arouse the conscience of the community over its injustice, is in reality expressing the very highest respect for law . . .

I must make two honest confessions to you, my Christian and Jewish brothers. First, I must confess that over the last few years I have been gravely disappointed with the white moderate. I have almost reached the regrettable conclusion that the Negro’s great stumbling block in the stride toward freedom is not the White Citizen’s COUNCILER or the Ku Klux Klanner, but the white moderate who is more devoted to order than to justice; who prefers a negative peace which is the absence of tension to a positive peace which is the presence of justice; who constantly says, “I agree with you in the goal you seek, but I can’t agree with your methods of direct action”; who paternalistically feels that he can set the timetable for another man’s freedom; who lives by the myth of time and who constantly advised the Negro to wait until a “more convenient season.” Shallow understanding from people of good will is more frustrating than absolute misunderstanding from people of ill will. Lukewarm acceptance is much more bewildering than outright rejection . . .

You spoke of our activity in Birmingham as extreme. At first I was rather disappointed that fellow clergymen would see my nonviolent efforts as those of the extremist. I started thinking about the fact that I stand in the middle of two opposing forces in the Negro community. One is a force of complacency made up of Negroes who, as a result of long years of oppression, have been so completely drained of self-respect and a sense of “somebodiness” that they have adjusted to segregation, and, of a few Negroes in the middle class who, because of a degree of academic and economic security, and because at points they profit by segregation, have unconsciously become insensitive to the problems of the masses. The other force is one of bitterness and hatred, and comes perilously close to advocating violence. It is expressed in the various black nationalist groups that are springing up over the nation, the largest and best known being Elijah Muhammad’s Muslim movement. This movement is nourished by the contemporary frustration over the continued existence of racial discrimination. It is made up of people who have lost faith in America, who have absolutely repudiated Christianity, and who have concluded that the white man is an incurable “devil.” I have tried to stand between these two forces, saying that we need not follow the “do-nothingism” of the complacent or the hatred and despair of the black nationalist. There is the more excellent way of love and nonviolent protest. I’m grateful to God that, through the Negro church, the dimension of nonviolence entered our struggle. If this philosophy had not emerged, I am convinced that by now many streets of the South would be flowing with floods of blood. And I am further convinced that if our white brothers dismiss us as “rabble-rousers” and “outside agitators” those of us who are working through the channels of nonviolent direct action and refuse to support our nonviolent efforts, millions of Negroes, out of frustration and despair, will seek solace and security in black nationalist ideologies, a development that will lead inevitably to a frightening racial nightmare.
George Wallace, *The Civil Rights Movement: Fraud, Sham, and Hoax* (1964)

We come here today in deference to the memory of those stalwart patriots who on July 4, 1776, pledged their lives, their fortunes, and their sacred honor to establish and defend the proposition that governments are created by the people, empowered by the people, derive their just powers from the consent of the people, and must forever remain subservient to the will of the people.

It is therefore a cruel irony that the President of the United States has only yesterday signed into law the most monstrous piece of legislation [the 1964 Civil Rights Act] ever enacted by the United States Congress.

It is a fraud, a sham, and a hoax. This bill will live in infamy. To sign it into law at any time is tragic. To do so upon the eve of the celebration of our independence insults the intelligence of the American people. It dishonors the memory of countless thousands of our dead who offered up their very lives in defense of principles which this bill destroys.

Never before in the history of this nation have so many human and property rights been destroyed by a single enactment of the Congress. It is an act of tyranny. It is the assassin’s knife stuck in the back of liberty. Today, this tyranny is imposed by the central government which claims the right to rule over our lives under sanction of the omnipotent black-robed despots who sit on the bench of the United States Supreme Court. This bill is fraudulent in intent, in design, and in execution. It is misnamed.

To illustrate the fraud—it is not a Civil Rights Bill. It is a Federal Penal Code. It creates Federal crimes which would take volumes to list and years to tabulate because it affects the lives of 192 million American citizens. Every person in every walk and station of life and every aspect of our daily lives becomes subject to the criminal provisions of this bill.

It threatens our freedom of speech, of assembly, or association, and makes the exercise of these Freedoms a [F]ederal crime under certain conditions.

It affects our political rights, our right to trial by jury, our right to the full use and enjoyment of our private property, the freedom from search and seizure of our private property and possessions, the freedom from harassment by Federal police and, in short, all the rights of individuals inherent in a society of free men.

Ministers, lawyers, teachers, newspapers, and every private citizen must guard his speech and watch his actions to avoid the deliberately imposed booby traps put into this bill. It is designed to make Federal crimes of our customs, beliefs, and traditions. Therefore, under the fantastic powers of the Federal judiciary to punish for contempt of court and under their fantastic powers to regulate our most intimate aspects of our lives by injunction, every American citizen is in jeopardy and must stand guard against these despots.

Yet a Federal judge may still try one without a jury under the provisions of this bill. It was the same persons who said it was a good bill before the amendment pretending to forbid busing of pupils from neighborhood schools. Yet a Federal judge may still order busing from one neighborhood school to another. They have done it, they will continue to do it.

It was left-wing radicals who led the fight in the Senate for the so-called civil rights bill now about to enslave our nation.

I am not about to be a party to anything having to do with the law that is going to destroy individual freedom and liberty in this country.

I am having nothing to do with enforcing a law that will destroy our free enterprise system.

I am having nothing to do with enforcing a law that will destroy neighborhood schools.

I am having nothing to do with enforcing a law that will destroy the rights of private property.
I am having nothing to do with enforcing a law that destroys your right—and my right—to choose my neighbors—or to sell my house to whomever I choose.

I am having nothing to do with enforcing a law that destroys the labor seniority system.

I am having nothing to do with this so-called civil rights bill. . . .

Nor would we have had a bill had it not been for the United States Supreme Court. . . . There is only one word to describe the Federal judiciary today. That word is “lousy.”

They assert more power than claimed by King George III, more power than Hitler, Mussolini, or Khrushchev ever had. They assert the power to declare unconstitutional our very thoughts. To create for us a system of moral and ethical values. To outlaw and declare unconstitutional, illegal, and immoral the customs, traditions, and beliefs of the people, and furthermore they assert the authority to enforce their decrees in all these subjects upon the American people without their consent. . . .

The court today, just as in 1776, is deaf to the voices of the people and their repeated entreaties: they have become arrogant, contemptuous, highhanded, and literal despots. . . . Today, 188 years later, we have actually witnessed the invasion of the State[s] of Arkansas, Mississippi, and Alabama by the armed forces of the United States and maintained in the state against the will of the people and without consent of state legislatures.

The United States Supreme Court is guilty of each and every one of these acts of tyranny. . . .

It is perfectly obvious from the left-wing liberal press and from the left-wing law journals that what the court is saying behind all the jargon is that they don’t like our form of government.

They think they can establish a better one. In order to do so it is necessary that they overthrow our existing form, destroy the democratic institutions created by the people, change the outlook, religion, and philosophy, and bring the whole area of human thought, aspiration, action and organization, under the absolute control of the court. Their decisions reveal this to be the goal of the liberal element on the court which is in a majority at present.

I do not call the members of the United States Supreme Court Communists. But I do say, and I submit for your judgment the fact that every single decision of the court in the past ten years which related in any way to each of these objectives has been decided against freedom and in favor of tyranny. . . .

The record reveals, for the past number of years, that the chief, if not the only beneficiaries of the present court’s rulings, have been duly and lawfully convicted criminals, Communists, atheists, and clients of vociferous left-wing minority groups. . . .

Let us look at the record further with respect to the court’s contribution to the destruction of the concept of God and the abolition of religion. The Federal court rules that your children shall not be permitted to read the bible in our public school systems. Let me tell you this, though. We still read the bible in Alabama schools and as long as I am governor we will continue to read the bible no matter what the Supreme Court says. . . .

So, let me say to you today. Take heart. Millions of Americans believe just as we in this great region of the United States believe. I shall never forget last spring as I stood in the midst of a great throng of South Milwaukee supporters at one of the greatest political rallies I have ever witnessed. A fine-looking man grabbed my hand and said:

“Governor, I’ve never been south of South Milwaukee, but I am a Southerner!” Of course, he was saying he believed in the principles and philosophy of the southern people. . . . of you here today and the people of my state of Alabama.

He was right. Being a southerner is no longer geographic. It’s a philosophy and an attitude. One destined to be a national philosophy—embraced by millions of Americans—which shall assume the mantle of leadership and steady a governmental structure in these days of crises.
Lyndon Johnson, Commencement Address at Howard University (1965)

In far too many ways American Negroes have been another nation: deprived of freedom, crippled by hatred, the doors of opportunity closed to hope.

In our time change has come to this Nation, too. The American Negro, acting with impressive restraint, has peacefully protested and marched, entered the courtrooms and the seats of government, demanding a justice that has long been denied. The voice of the Negro was the call to action. But it is a tribute to America that, once aroused, the courts and the Congress, the President and most of the people, have been the allies of progress.

Thus we have seen the high court of the country declare that discrimination based on race was repugnant to the Constitution, and therefore void. We have seen in 1957, and 1960, and again in 1964, the first civil rights legislation in this Nation in almost an entire century.

As majority leader of the United States Senate, I helped to guide two of these bills through the Senate. And, as your President, I was proud to sign the third. And now very soon we will have the fourth—a new law guaranteeing every American the right to vote. No act of my entire administration will give me greater satisfaction than the day when my signature makes this bill, too, the law of this land. The voting rights bill will be the latest, and among the most important, in a long series of victories…

That beginning is freedom; and the barriers to that freedom are tumbling down. Freedom is the right to share, share fully and equally, in American society—to vote, to hold a job, to enter a public place, to go to school. It is the right to be treated in every part of our national life as a person equal in dignity and promise to all others.

But freedom is not enough. You do not wipe away the scars of centuries by saying: Now you are free to go where you want, and do as you desire, and choose the leaders you please. You do not take a person who, for years, has been hobbled by chains and liberate him, bring him up to the starting line of a race and then say, "you are free to compete with all the others," and still justly believe that you have been completely fair. Thus it is not enough just to open the gates of opportunity. All our citizens must have the ability to walk through those gates.

This is the next and the more profound stage of the battle for civil rights. We seek not just freedom but opportunity. We seek not just legal equity but human ability, not just equality as a right and a theory but equality as a fact and equality as a result.

For the task is to give 20 million Negroes the same chance as every other American to learn and grow, to work and share in society, to develop their abilities—physical, mental and spiritual, and to pursue their individual happiness.

To this end equal opportunity is essential, but not enough, not enough. Men and women of all races are born with the same range of abilities. But ability is not just the product of birth. Ability is stretched or stunted by the family that you live with, and the neighborhood you live in—by the school you go to and the poverty or the richness of your surroundings. It is the product of a hundred unseen forces playing upon the little infant, the child, and finally the man…

For the great majority of Negro Americans—the poor, the unemployed, the uprooted, and the dispossessed—there is a much grimmer story. They still, as we meet here tonight, are another nation. Despite the court orders and the laws, despite the legislative victories and the speeches, for them the walls are rising and the gulf is widening.

Here are some of the facts of this American failure.

Thirty-five years ago the rate of unemployment for Negroes and whites was about the same. Tonight the Negro rate is twice as high.

In 1948 the 8 percent unemployment rate for Negro teenage boys was actually less than that of whites. By last year that rate had grown to 23 percent, as against 13 percent for whites unemployed.
Between 1949 and 1959, the income of Negro men relative to white men declined in every section of this country. From 1952 to 1963 the median income of Negro families compared to white actually dropped from 57 percent to 53 percent…

Negro poverty is not white poverty. Many of its causes and many of its cures are the same. But there are differences—deep, corrosive, obstinate differences—radiating painful roots into the community, and into the family, and the nature of the individual.

These differences are not racial differences. They are solely and simply the consequence of ancient brutality, past injustice, and present prejudice. They are anguishing to observe. For the Negro they are a constant reminder of oppression. For the white they are a constant reminder of guilt. But they must be faced and they must be dealt with and they must be overcome, if we are ever to reach the time when the only difference between Negroes and whites is the color of their skin.

Nor can we find a complete answer in the experience of other American minorities. They made a valiant and a largely successful effort to emerge from poverty and prejudice.

The Negro, like these others, will have to rely mostly upon his own efforts. But he just can not do it alone. For they did not have the heritage of centuries to overcome, and they did not have a cultural tradition which had been twisted and battered by endless years of hatred and hopelessness, nor were they excluded—these others—because of race or color—a feeling whose dark intensity is matched by no other prejudice in our society.

Perhaps most important—its influence radiating to every part of life—is the breakdown of the Negro family structure. For this, most of all, white America must accept responsibility. It flows from centuries of oppression and persecution of the Negro man. It flows from the long years of degradation and discrimination, which have attacked his dignity and assaulted his ability to produce for his family.

This, too, is not pleasant to look upon. But it must be faced by those whose serious intent is to improve the life of all Americans.
**Black Panther Party, “What We Want, What We Believe” (1966)**

1. *We want freedom. We want power to determine the destiny of our Black Community.*

   We believe that black people will not be free until we are able to determine our destiny.

2. *We want full employment for our people.*

   We believe that the federal government is responsible and obligated to give every man employment or a guaranteed income. We believe that if the white American businessmen will not give full employment, then the means of production should be taken from the businessmen and placed in the community so that the people of the community can organize and employ all of its people and give a high standard of living.

3. *We want an end to the robbery by the white man of our Black Community.*

   We believe that this racist government has robbed us and now we are demanding the overdue debt of forty acres and two mules. Forty acres and two mules was promised 100 years ago as restitution for slave labor and mass murder of black people. We will accept the payment as currency which will be distributed to our many communities. The Germans are now aiding the Jews in Israel for the genocide of the Jewish people. The Germans murdered six million Jews. The American racist has taken part in the slaughter of over twenty million black people; therefore, we feel that this is a modest demand that we make.

4. *We want decent housing, fit for shelter of human beings.*

   We believe that if the white landlords will not give decent housing to our black community, then the housing and the land should be made into cooperatives so that our community, with government aid, can build and make decent housing for its people.

5. *We want education for our people that exposes the true nature of this decadent American society. We want education that teaches us our true history and our role in the present-day society.*

   We believe in an educational system that will give to our people a knowledge of self. If a man does not have knowledge of himself and his position in society and the world, then he has little chance to relate to anything else.

6. *We want all black men to be exempt from military service.*

   We believe that Black people should not be forced to fight in the military service to defend a racist government that does not protect us. We will not fight and kill other people of color in the world who, like black people, are being victimized by the white racist government of America. We will protect ourselves from the force and violence of the racist police and the racist military, by whatever means necessary.

7. *We want an immediate end to police brutality and murder of black people.*

   We believe we can end police brutality in our black community by organizing black self-defense groups that are dedicated to defending our black community from racist police oppression and brutality. The Second Amendment to the Constitution of the United States gives a right to bear arms. We therefore believe that all black people should arm themselves for self defense.

8. *We want freedom for all black men held in federal, state, county and city prisons and jails.*

   We believe that all black people should be released from the many jails and prisons because they have not received a fair and impartial trial.

9. *We want all black people when brought to trial to be tried in court by a jury of their peer group or people from their black communities, as defined by the Constitution of the United States.*
We believe that the courts should follow the United States Constitution so that black people will receive fair trials. The 14th Amendment of the U.S. Constitution gives a man a right to be tried by his peer group. A peer is a person from a similar economic, social, religious, geographical, environmental, historical and racial background. To do this the court will be forced to select a jury from the black community from which the black defendant came. We have been, and are being tried by all-white juries that have no understanding of the "average reasoning man" of the black community.

10. We want land, bread, housing, education, clothing, justice and peace. And as our major political objective, a United Nations-supervised plebiscite to be held throughout the black colony in which only black colonial subjects will be allowed to participate for the purpose of determining the will of black people as to their national destiny.

When in the course of human events, it becomes necessary for one people to dissolve the political bands which have connected them with another, and to assume, among the powers of the earth, the separate and equal station to which the laws of nature and nature's God entitle them, a decent respect to the opinions of mankind requires that they should declare the causes which impel them to the separation.

We hold these truths to be self evident, that all men are created equal; that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights; that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. That, to secure these rights, governments are instituted among men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed; that, whenever any form of government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the right of the people to alter or to abolish it, and to institute a new government, laying its foundation on such principles, and organizing its powers in such form, as to them shall seem most likely to effect their safety and happiness.

Prudence, indeed, will dictate that governments long established should not be changed for light and transient causes; and accordingly, all experience hath shown, that mankind are more disposed to suffer, while evils are sufferable, than to right themselves by abolishing the forms to which they are accustomed.
National Organization for Women, Statement of Purpose, October 29, 1966

We, men and women who hereby constitute ourselves as the National Organization for Women, believe that the time has come for a new movement toward true equality for all women in America, and toward a fully equal partnership of the sexes, as part of the world-wide revolution of human rights now taking place within and beyond our national borders.

The purpose of NOW is to take action to bring women into full participation in the mainstream of American society now, exercising all the privileges and responsibilities thereof in truly equal partnership with men...

NOW is dedicated to the proposition that women first and foremost are human beings, who, like all other people in our society, must have the chance to develop their fullest human potential. We believe that women can achieve such equality only by accepting to the full the challenges and responsibilities they share with all other people in our society, as part of the decision-making mainstream of American political, economic and social life.

We organize to initiate or support action, nationally or in any part of this nation, by individuals or organizations, to break through the silken curtain of prejudice and discrimination against women in government, industry, the professions, the churches, the political parties, the judiciary, the labor unions, in education, science, medicine, law, religion and every other field of importance in American society.

Enormous changes taking place in our society make it both possible and urgently necessary to advance the unfinished revolution of women toward true equality, now. With life span lengthened to nearly seventy-five years it is no longer either necessary or possible for women to devote the greater part of their lives to child-rearing; yet childbearing and rearing—which continues to be a most important part of most women’s lives—still is used to justify barring women from equal professional and economic participation and advance.

Today’s technology has reduced most of the productive chores which women once performed in the home and in mass-production industries based upon routine unskilled labor. This same technology has virtually eliminated the quality of muscular strength as a criterion for filling most jobs, while intensifying America’s need for creative intelligence. In view of this new industrial revolution created by automation in the mid-twentieth century, women can and must participate in old and new fields of society in full equality—or become permanent outsiders. . . .

There is no civil rights movement to speak for women, as there has been for Negroes and other victims of discrimination. The National Organization for Women must therefore begin to speak.

WE BELIEVE that the power of American law, and the protection guaranteed by the U.S. Constitution to the civil rights of all individuals, must be effectively applied and enforced to isolate and remove patterns of sex discrimination, to ensure equality of opportunity in employment and education, and equality of civil and political rights and responsibilities on behalf of women, as well as for Negroes and other deprived groups.

We realize that women’s problems are linked to many broader questions of social justice; their solution will require concerted action by many groups. Therefore, convinced that human rights for all are indivisible, we expect to give active support to the common cause of equal rights for all those who suffer discrimination and deprivation, and we call upon other organizations committed to such goals to support our efforts toward equality for women.

WE DO NOT ACCEPT the token appointment of a few women to high-level positions in government and industry as a substitute for a serious continuing effort to recruit and advance women according to their individual abilities. To this end, we urge American government and industry to mobilize the same resources of ingenuity and command with which they have solved problems of far greater difficulty than those now impeding the progress of women.

WE BELIEVE that this nation has a capacity at least as great as other nations, to innovate new social institutions which will enable women to enjoy true equality of opportunity and responsibility in society, without
conflict with their responsibilities as mothers and homemakers. In such innovations, America does not lead the Western world, but lags by decades behind many European countries. We do not accept the traditional assumption that a woman has to choose between marriage and motherhood, on the one hand, and serious participation in industry or the professions on the other. We question the present expectation that all normal women will retire from job or profession for ten or fifteen years, to devote their full time to raising children, only to reenter the job market at a relatively minor level. This in itself is a deterrent to the aspirations of women, to their acceptance into management or professional training courses, and to the very possibility of equality of opportunity or real choice, for all but a few women. Above all, we reject the assumption that these problems are the unique responsibility of each individual woman, rather than a basic social dilemma which society must solve. True equality of opportunity and freedom of choice for women requires such practical and possible innovations as a nationwide network of child-care centers, which will make it unnecessary for women to retire completely from society until their children are grown, and national programs to provide retraining for women who have chosen to care for their own children full time.

WE BELIEVE that it is as essential for every girl to be educated to her full potential of human ability as it is for every boy—with the knowledge that such education is the key to effective participation in today’s economy and that, for a girl as for a boy, education can only be serious where there is expectation that it will be used in society. We believe that American educators are capable of devising means of imparting such expectations to girl students. Moreover, we consider the decline in the proportion of women receiving higher and professional education to be evidence of discrimination. This discrimination may take the form of quotas against the admission of women to colleges and professional schools; lack of encouragement by parents, counselors and educators; denial of loans or fellowships; or the traditional or arbitrary procedures in graduate and professional training geared in terms of men, which inadvertently discriminate against women. We believe that the same serious attention must be given to high school dropouts who are girls as to boys.

WE REJECT the current assumptions that a man must carry the sole burden of supporting himself, his wife, and family, and that a woman is automatically entitled to lifelong support by a man upon her marriage, or that marriage, home and family are primarily woman’s world and responsibility—hers, to dominate, his to support. We believe that a true partnership between the sexes demands a different concept of marriage, an equitable sharing of the responsibilities of home and children and of the economic burdens of their support. We believe that proper recognition should be given to the economic and social value of homemaking and child care. To these ends, we will seek to open a reexamination of laws and mores governing marriage and divorce, for we believe that the current state of “half-equality” between the sexes discriminates against both men and women, and is the cause of much unnecessary hostility between the sexes.

WE BELIEVE that women must now exercise their political rights and responsibilities as American citizens. They must refuse to be segregated on the basis of sex into separate-and-not-equal ladies’ auxiliaries in the political parties, and they must demand representation according to their numbers in the regularly constituted party committees—at local, state, and national levels—and in the informal power structure, participating fully in the selection of candidates and political decision-making, and running for office themselves.

IN THE INTERESTS OF THE HUMAN DIGNITY OF WOMEN, we will protest and endeavor to change the false image of women now prevalent in the mass media, and in the texts, ceremonies, laws, and practices of our major social institutions. Such images perpetuate contempt for women by society and by women for themselves. We are similarly opposed to all policies and practices—in church, state, college, factory, or office—which, in the guise of protectiveness, not only deny opportunities but also foster in women self-denigration, dependence, and evasion of responsibility, undermine their confidence in their own abilities and foster contempt for women.

The oppression suffered by Chicanas is different from that suffered by most women in this country. Because Chicanas are part of an oppressed nationality, they are subjected to the racism practiced against La Raza. Since the overwhelming majority of Chicanos are workers, Chicanas are also victims of the exploitation of the working class. But in addition, Chicanas, along with the rest of women, are relegated to an inferior position because of their sex. Thus, Raza women suffer a triple form of oppression: as members of an oppressed nationality, as workers, and as women. Chicanas have no trouble understanding this…

On the other hand, they also understand that the struggle now unfolding against the oppression of women is not only relevant to them, but is their struggle. Because sexism and male chauvinism are so deeply rooted in this society, there is a strong tendency, even within the Chicano movement, to deny the basic right of Chicanas to organize around their own concrete issues. Instead they are told to stay away from the women's liberation movement because it is an "Anglo thing."…

When Chicano men oppose the efforts of women to move against their oppression, they are actually opposing the struggle of every woman in this country aimed at changing a society in which Chicanos themselves are oppressed. They are saying to 51 percent of this country's population that they have no right to fight for their liberation. Moreover, they are denying one half of La Raza this basic right. They are denying Raza women, who are triply oppressed, the right to struggle around their specific, real, and immediate needs.

In essence, they are doing just what the white male rulers of this country have done. The white male rulers want Chicanas to accept their oppression because they understand that when Chicanas begin a movement demanding legal abortions, child care, and equal pay for equal work, this movement will pose a real threat to their ability to rule…

The same problem arose when the masses of people in this country began to move in opposition to the war in Vietnam. Because Black people did not until recently participate in massive numbers in antiwar demonstrations, the bourgeois media went on a campaign to convince us that the reason Blacks were not a visible component of these demonstrations was because the antiwar movement was a "white thing." Although, for a while, this tactic was successful in slowing down the progress of the Black nationalist movement, for whom the question of the war is of vital importance, Black antiwar activity is now clearly rising.

But once again the white males who run this country are up to their old tricks. Only this time around it is the women's liberation movement which is a "white thing." Again, the bourgeois media is a key tool for perpetrating this myth. As one Chicana explains, in an article entitled "Chicanas Speak Out" in *Salsipuedes*, published in Santa Barbara, California: "The real issue of the women's liberation movement is fighting the established female role in society which has kept women enslaved as human beings. But the news media portrays women's liberation people as karate chopping, man-hating hippies."

Among the many distortions about the feminist movement is the argument that women are simply fighting against men…Thus, since the feminist movement is "antimale," when Chicanas attempt to organize against their own oppression they are accused of trying to divide the Chicano movement.

The appeal for "unity" based on the continued submission of women is a false one. While it is true that the unity of La Raza is the basic foundation of the Chicano movement, when Chicano men talk about maintaining La Familia and the "cultural heritage" of La Raza, they are in fact talking about maintaining the age-old concept of keeping the woman barefoot, pregnant, and in the kitchen. On the basis of the subordination of women there can be no real unity.
Maxine Williams, “Why Women’s Liberation is Important to Black Women,” in Black Women’s Liberation (December, 1970).

As if black women did not have enough to contend with — being exploited economically as a worker, being used as a source of cheap labor because she is a female and being treated even worse because she is black — she also finds herself fighting the beauty "standards" of a white Western society.

Years ago it was a common sight to see black women wearing blond wigs and rouge, the object being to get as close to the white beauty standard as one possibly could. But, in spite of the fact that bleaching creams and hair straighteners were used, the trick just didn't work. Her skin was still black instead of fair and her hair kinky instead of straight. She was constantly being compared to the white woman, and she was the antithesis of what was considered beautiful. Usually when she saw a black man with a white woman, the image she had of herself became even more painful.

But now "black is beautiful," and the black woman is playing a more prominent role in the movement. But there is a catch! She is still being told to step back and let the black man come forward and lead…

So today the black woman still finds herself up the creek. She feels that she must take the nod from "her man," because if she "acts up," then she just might lose him to a white woman. She must still subordinate herself, her own feelings and desires, especially when it comes to the right of having control of her own body… Enforced motherhood is a form of male supremacy; it is reactionary and brutal. During slavery, the plantation masters forced motherhood on black women in order to enrich their plantations with more human labor. It is women who must decide whether they wish to have children or not. Women must have the right to control their own bodies.

There is now a women's liberation movement growing in the United States. By and large, black women have not played a prominent role in this movement. This is due to the fact that many black women have not yet developed a feminist consciousness. Black women see their problem mainly as one of national oppression.

The middle-class mentality of some white women in the movement has also helped to make the issue of women's liberation seem to be irrelevant to black women's needs. For instance, at the November 1969 Congress to Unite Women in New York, some of the participants did not want to take a stand against the school tracking system, that is, the system school authorities use to channel students into certain types of occupations on the basis of their so-called intelligence. These women feared that "good" students thrown in with "bad" ones would cause the "brilliant" students to leave school, thus lowering the standards. One white woman had the gall to mention to me that she felt women living in Scarsdale were more oppressed than Third World women trapped in the ghetto. There was also little attempt to deal with the problems of poor women, for example, the fact that women in Scarsdale exploit black women as domestics.

The movement must take a clearer stand against the horrendous conditions in which poor women are forced to work. Some women in the movement are in favor of eliminating the state protective laws for women, that is, the laws which regulate women's working conditions. But poor women who are forced to work in sweatshops, factories and laundries need those laws on the books. Not only must the state protective laws for women remain on the books, but we must see that they are enforced and made even stronger. I do not mean that those laws which are so "protective" that women are protected right out of a job should be kept. But any laws that better the working conditions for women should be strengthened, and extended to men!

Women in the women's liberation movement assert that they are tired of being slaves to their husbands, confined to the household performing menial tasks. While the black woman can sympathize with this view, she does not feel that breaking her ass every day from nine to five is any form of liberation.

I am sad to hear about your accusations in the press that our union movement and table grape boycott have been successful because we have used violence and terror tactics. If what you say is true, I have been a failure and should withdraw from the struggle; but you are left with the awesome moral responsibility, before God and man, to come forward with whatever information you have so that corrective action can begin at once. If for any reason you fail to come forth to substantiate your charges, then you must be held responsible for committing violence against us, albeit violence of the tongue…

Today on Good Friday 1969 we remember the life and the sacrifice of Martin Luther King, Jr., who gave himself totally to the nonviolent struggle for peace and justice…For our part I admit that we have seized upon every tactic and strategy consistent with the morality of our cause to expose that injustice and thus to heighten the sensitivity of the American conscience so that farm workers will have without bloodshed their own union and the dignity of bargaining with their agribusiness employers. By lying about the nature of our movement, Mr. Barr, you are working against nonviolent social change. Unwittingly perhaps, you may unleash that other force which our union by discipline and deed, censure and education has sought to avoid, that panacea shortcut, that senseless violence which honors no color, class or neighborhood.

You must understand – I must make you understand – that our membership and the hopes and aspirations of the hundreds of thousands of the poor and dispossessed that have been raised on our account are, above all, human beings, no better and no worse than any other cross-section of human society; we are not saints because we are poor, but by the same measure neither are we immoral. We are men and women who have suffered and endured much, and not only because of our abject poverty but because we have been kept poor. The colors of our skins, the languages of our cultural and native origins, the lack of formal education, the exclusion from the democratic process, the numbers of our men slain in recent wars – all these burdens generation after generation have sought to demoralize us, to break our human spirit. But God knows that we are not beasts of burden, agricultural implements, or rented slaves; we are men. And mark this well, Mr. Barr, we are men locked in a death struggle against man’s inhumanity to man in the industry that you represent. And this struggle itself gives meaning to our life and ennobles our dying.

I ask you to recognize and bargain with our union before the economic pressure of the boycott and strike takes an irrevocable toll; but if not, I ask you to at least sit down with us to discuss the safeguards necessary to keep our historical struggle free of violence. I make this appeal because as one of the leaders of our nonviolent movement, I know and accept my responsibility for preventing, if possible, the destruction of human life and property…

Mr. Barr, let me be painfully honest with you. You must understand these things. We advocate militant nonviolence as our means for social revolution and to achieve justice for our people, but we are not blind or deaf to the desperate and moody winds of human frustration, impatience and rage that blow among us. Gandhi himself admitted that if his only choice were cowardice or violence, he would choose violence. Men are not angels, and time and tide wait for no man. Precisely because of these powerful human emotions, we have tried to involve masses of people in their own struggle. Participation and self-determination remain the best experience of freedom, and free men instinctively prefer democratic change and even protect the rights guaranteed to seek it. Only the enslaved in despair have need of violent overthrow.

This letter does not express all that is in my heart, Mr. Barr. But if it says nothing else it says that we do not hate you or rejoice to see your industry destroyed; we hate the agribusiness system that seeks to keep us enslaved, and we shall overcome and change it not by retaliation or bloodshed but by a determined nonviolent struggle carried on by those masses of farm workers who intend to be free and human.

In the past year there has been an awakening of gay liberation ideas and energy. How it began we don’t know; maybe we were inspired by black people and their freedom movement; we learned how to stop pretending form the hip revolution. Amerika in all its ugliness has surfaced with the war and our national leaders. And we are revulsed by the quality of our ghetto life…

We want to make ourselves clear: our first job is to free ourselves; that means clearing our heads of the garbage that’s been poured into them. This article is an attempt at raising a number of issues, and presenting some ideas to replace the old ones. It is primarily for ourselves, a starting point of discussion. If straight people of good will find it useful in understanding what liberation is about, so much the better.

It should also be clear that these are the views of one person, and are determined not only by my homosexuality, but my being white, male, middle class. It is my individual consciousness. Our group consciousness will evolve as we get ourselves together - we are only at the beginning…

Homosexuality is not a lot of things. It is not a makeshift in the absence of the opposite sex; it is not a hatred or rejection of the opposite sex; it is not genetic; it is not the result of broken homes except inasmuch as we could see the sham of American marriage. Homosexuality is the capacity to love someone of the same sex. . .

Heterosexuality: Exclusive heterosexuality is fucked up. It reflects a fear of people of the same sex, it’s anti-homosexual, and it is fraught with frustration. Heterosexual sex is fucked up too; ask women’s liberation about what straight guys are like in bed. Sex is aggression for the male chauvinist; sex is obligation for the traditional woman. And among the young, the modern, the hip, it’s only a subtle version of the same. For us to become heterosexual in the sense that our straight brothers and sisters are is not a cure, it is a disease. . .

Male Chauvinism: All men are infected with male chauvinism - we were brought up that way. It means we assume that women play subordinate roles and are less human than ourselves. (At an early gay liberation meeting one guy said, “Why don’t we invite women’s liberation - they can bring sandwiches and coffee.”) It is no wonder that so few gay women have become active in our groups.

Male chauvinism, however, is not central to us. We can junk it much more easily than straight men can. For we understand oppression. We have largely opted out of a system which oppresses women daily - our egos are not built on putting women down and having them build us up. [We] need to purge male chauvinism, both in behavior and in thought among us. Chick equals nigger equals queer. Think it over. . .

Gay ‘ stereotypes’: The straight’s image of the gay world is defined largely by those of us who have violated straight roles. There is a tendency among ‘homophile’ groups to deplore gays who play visible roles - the queens and the nellies. As liberated gays, we must take a clear stand…

Closet queens: This phrase is becoming analogous to ‘Uncle Tom.’ To pretend to be straight sexually, or to pretend to be straight socially, is probably the most harmful pattern of behavior in the ghetto. The married guy who makes it on the side secretly; the guy who will go to bed once but won’t develop any gay relationships; the pretender at work or school who changes the gender of the friend he’s talking about; the guy who’ll suck cock in the bushes but won’t go to bed.

If we are liberated we are open with our sexuality. Closet queenery must end…

But not every straight is our enemy. Many of us have mixed identities, and have ties with other liberation movements: women, blacks, other minority groups; we may also have taken on an identity which is vital to us: ecology, dope, ideology. And face it: we can’t change Amerika alone: Who do we look to for collaboration?

1. Women’s Liberation: summarizing earlier statements, 1) they are our closest ally; we must try hard to get together with them. 2) a lesbian caucus is probably the best way to attack gay guys’ male chauvinism, and challenge the straightness of women’s liberation; 3) as males we must be sensitive to their developing identities as women, and respect that; if we know what our freedom is about, they certainly know what’s best for them.
2. Black liberation: This is tenuous right now because of the uptightness and supermasculinity of many black men (which is understandable). Despite that, we must support their movement, particularly when they are under attack from the establishment; we must show them that we mean business; and we must figure out which our common enemies are: police, city hall, capitalism.

3. Chicanos: Basically the same problem as with blacks: trying to overcome mutual animosity and fear, and finding ways to support them. The extra problem of super up-tightness and machismo among Latin cultures, and the traditional pattern of Mexicans beating up “queers” can be overcome: we’re both oppressed, and by the same people at the top.

4. White radicals and ideologues: We’re not, as a group, Marxist or communist. We haven’t figured out what kind of political/economic system is good for us as gays. Neither capitalist or socialist countries have treated us as anything other than non grata so far…

5. Hip and street-people: A major dynamic of rising gay lib sentiment is the hip revolution within the gay community. Emphasis on love, dropping out, being honest, expressing yourself through hair and clothes, and smoking dope are all attributes of this. The gays who are the least vulnerable to attack by the establishment have been the freest to express themselves on gay liberation.

We can make a direct appeal to young people, who are not so uptight about homosexuality…The hip/street culture has led people into a lot of freeing activities: encounter/sensitivity, the quest for reality, freeing territory for the people, ecological consciousness, communes. These are real points of agreement and probably will make it easier for them to get their heads straight about homosexuality, too.

6. Homophile groups: 1) reformist or pokey as they sometimes are, they are our brothers. They’ll grow as we have grown and grow. Do not attack them in straight or mixed company. 2) ignore their attack on us. 3) cooperate where cooperation is possible without essential compromise of our identity.
Franklin Roosevelt's rapid conversion from Constitutionalism to the doctrine of unlimited government is an oft-told story. But I am here concerned not so much by the abandonment of States' Rights by the national Democratic Party—an event that occurred some years ago when that party was captured by the Socialist ideologues in and about the labor movement—as by the unmistakable tendency of the Republican Party to adopt the same course. The result is that today neither of our two parties maintains a meaningful commitment to the principle of States' Rights. Thus, the cornerstone of the Republic, our chief bulwark against the encroachment of individual freedom by Big Government, is fast disappearing under the piling sands of absolutism...

It is quite true that the integration issue is affected by the States' Rights principle, and that the South's position on the issue is, today, the most conspicuous expression of the principle. So much so that the country is now in the grips of a spirited and sometimes ugly controversy over an imagined conflict between States' Rights, on the one hand, and what are called "civil rights" on the other.

States' Rights are easy enough to define. The Tenth Amendment does it succinctly: "The powers not delegated to the United States by the Constitution nor prohibited by it to the States are reserved to the States respectively, or to the people...

A civil right is a right that is asserted and is therefore protected by some valid law. It may be asserted by the common law, or by local or federal statutes, or by the Constitution; but unless a right is incorporated in the law, it is not a civil right and is not enforceable by the instruments of the civil law...

The federal Constitution does not require the States to maintain racially mixed schools. Despite the recent holding of the Supreme Court, I am firmly convinced—not only that integrated schools are not required—but that the Constitution does not permit any interference whatsoever by the federal government in the field of education. It may be just or wise or expedient for negro children to attend the same schools as white children, but they do not have a civil right to do so which is protected by the federal constitution, or which is enforceable by the federal government.

The intentions of the founding fathers in this matter are beyond any doubt: no powers regarding education were given the federal government. Consequently, under the Tenth Amendment, jurisdiction over the entire field was reserved to the States. The remaining question is whether the Fourteenth Amendment-concretely, that amendment's "equal protection" clause-modified the original prohibition against federal intervention.

To my knowledge it has never been seriously argued—the argument certainly was not made by the Supreme Court—that the authors of the Fourteenth Amendment intended to alter the Constitutional scheme with regard to education. Indeed, in the famous school integration decision, Brown v. Board of Education (1954), the Supreme Court justices expressly acknowledged that they were not being guided by the intentions of the amendment's authors. "In approaching this problem" Chief Justice Warren said, "we cannot turn the clock back to 1868 when the amendment was adopted . . . We must consider public education in the light of its full development and in its present place in American life throughout the nation." In effect, the Court said that what matters is not the ideas of the men who wrote the Constitution, but the Court's ideas. It was only by engrafting its own views onto the established law of the land that the Court was able to reach the decision it did...

It so happens that I am in agreement with the objectives of the Supreme Court as stated in the Brown decision. I believe that it is both wise and just for negro children to attend the same schools as whites, and that to deny them this opportunity carries with it strong implications of inferiority. I am not prepared, however, to impose that judgment of mine on the people of Mississippi or South Carolina, or to tell them what methods should be adopted and what pace should be kept in striving toward that goal...
We have been led to look upon taxation as merely a problem of public financing: How much money does the government need? We have been led to discount, and often to forget altogether, the bearing of taxation on the problem of individual freedom. We have been persuaded that the government has an unlimited claim on the wealth of the people, and that the only pertinent question is what portion of its claim the government should exercise. The American taxpayer, I think, has lost confidence in his claim to his money. He has been handicapped in resisting high taxes by the feeling that he is, in the nature of things, obliged to accommodate whatever need for his wealth government chooses to assert...

This attack on property rights is actually an attack on freedom. It is another instance of the modern failure to take into account the whole man. How can a man be truly free if he is denied the means to exercise freedom? How can he be free if the fruits of his labor are not his to dispose of, but are treated, instead, as part of a common pool of public wealth? Property and freedom are inseparable: to the extent government takes the one in the form of taxes, it intrudes on the other...

The root evil is that the government is engaged in activities in which it has no legitimate business. As long as the federal government acknowledges responsibility in a given social or economic field, its spending in that field cannot be substantially reduced. As long as the federal government acknowledges responsibility for education, for example, the amount of federal aid is bound to increase, at the very least, in direct proportion to the cost of supporting the nation's schools. The only way to curtail spending substantially, is to eliminate the programs on which excess spending is consumed.

The government must begin to withdraw from a whole series of programs that are outside its constitutional mandate—from social welfare programs, education, public power, agriculture, public housing, urban renewal and all the other activities that can be better performed by lower levels of government or by private institutions or by individuals...

And still the awful truth remains: We can establish the domestic conditions for maximizing freedom, along the lines I have indicated, and yet become slaves. We can do this by losing the Cold War to the Soviet Union...

If an enemy power is bent on conquering you, and proposes to turn all of his resources to that end, he is at war with you; and you—unless you contemplate surrender—are at war with him. Moreover-unless you contemplate treason-your objective, like his, will be victory. Not “peace,” but victory. Now, while traitors (and perhaps cowards) have at times occupied key positions in our government, it is clear that our national leadership over the past fourteen years has favored neither surrender nor treason. It is equally clear, however, that our leaders have not made victory the goal of American policy. And the reason that they have not done so, I am saying, is that they have never believed deeply that the Communists are in earnest.
A TIME FOR CHOOSING (The Speech – October 27, 1964)

I have spent most of my life as a Democrat. I recently have seen fit to follow another course. I believe that the issues confronting us cross party lines. Now, one side in this campaign has been telling us that the issues of this election are the maintenance of peace and prosperity. The line has been used, "We've never had it so good."

But I have an uncomfortable feeling that this prosperity isn't something on which we can base our hopes for the future. No nation in history has ever survived a tax burden that reached a third of its national income. Today, 37 cents out of every dollar earned in this country is the tax collector's share, and yet our government continues to spend 17 million dollars a day more than the government takes in. We haven't balanced our budget 28 out of the last 34 years...

This is the issue of this election: Whether we believe in our capacity for self-government or whether we abandon the American revolution and confess that a little intellectual elite in a far-distant capitol can plan our lives for us better than we can plan them ourselves.

You and I are told increasingly we have to choose between a left or right. Well I'd like to suggest there is no such thing as a left or right. There's only an up or down—[up] man's old—old-aged dream, the ultimate in individual freedom consistent with law and order, or down to the ant heap of totalitarianism. And regardless of their sincerity, their humanitarian motives, those who would trade our freedom for security have embarked on this downward course.

In this vote-harvesting time, they use terms like the "Great Society," or as we were told a few days ago by the President, we must accept a greater government activity in the affairs of the people. But they've been a little more explicit in the past and among themselves; and all of the things I now will quote have appeared in print. These are not Republican accusations. For example, they have voices that say, "The cold war will end through our acceptance of a not undemocratic socialism." Another voice says, "The profit motive has become outmoded. It must be replaced by the incentives of the welfare state." Or, "Our traditional system of individual freedom is incapable of solving the complex problems of the 20th century." Senator Fullbright has said at Stanford University that the Constitution is outmoded. He referred to the President as "our moral teacher and our leader," and he says he is "hobbled in his task by the restrictions of power imposed on him by this antiquated document." He must "be freed," so that he "can do for us" what he knows "is best." And Senator Clark of Pennsylvania, another articulate spokesman, defines liberalism as "meeting the material needs of the masses through the full power of centralized government."

Well, I, for one, resent it when a representative of the people refers to you and me, the free men and women of this country, as "the masses." This is a term we haven't applied to ourselves in America. But beyond that, "the full power of centralized government"—this was the very thing the Founding Fathers sought to minimize. They knew that governments don't control things. A government can't control the economy without controlling people. And they know when a government sets out to do that, it must use force and coercion to achieve its purpose. They also knew, those Founding Fathers, that outside of its legitimate functions, government does nothing as well or as economically as the private sector of the economy...

Under urban renewal the assault on freedom carries on. Private property rights [are] so diluted that public interest is almost anything a few government planners decide it should be. In a program that takes from the needy and gives to the greedy, we see such spectacles as in Cleveland, Ohio, a million-and-a-half-dollar building completed only three years ago must be destroyed to make way for what government officials call a "more compatible use of the land." The President tells us he's now going to start building public housing units in the thousands, where heretofore we've only built them in the hundreds. But FHA [Federal Housing Authority] and the Veterans Administration tell us they
have 120,000 housing units they've taken back through mortgage foreclosure. For three decades, we've sought to solve the problems of unemployment through government planning, and the more the plans fail, the more the planners plan. The latest is the Area Redevelopment Agency...

We have so many people who can't see a fat man standing beside a thin one without coming to the conclusion the fat man got that way by taking advantage of the thin one. So they're going to solve all the problems of human misery through government and government planning. Well, now, if government planning and welfare had the answer — and they've had almost 30 years of it — shouldn't we expect government to read the score to us once in a while? Shouldn't they be telling us about the decline each year in the number of people needing help? The reduction in the need for public housing?

But the reverse is true. Each year the need grows greater; the program grows greater. We were told four years ago that 17 million people went to bed hungry each night. Well that was probably true. They were all on a diet. But now we're told that 9.3 million families in this country are poverty-stricken on the basis of earning less than 3,000 dollars a year. Welfare spending is 10 times greater than in the dark depths of the Depression. We're spending 45 billion dollars on welfare. Now do a little arithmetic, and you'll find that if we divided the 45 billion dollars up equally among those 9 million poor families, we'd be able to give each family 4,600 dollars a year. But this added to their present income should eliminate poverty. Direct aid to the poor, however, is only running only about 600 dollars per family. It would seem that somewhere there must be some overhead.

Now — so now we declare "war on poverty," or "You, too, can be a Bobby Baker." Now do they honestly expect us to believe that if we add 1 billion dollars to the 45 billion we're spending, one more program to the 30-odd we have — and remember, this new program doesn't replace any, it just duplicates existing programs — do they believe that poverty is suddenly going to disappear by magic? Well, in all fairness I should explain there is one part of the new program that isn't duplicated. This is the youth feature. We're now going to solve the dropout problem, juvenile delinquency, by instituting something like the old CCC camps [Civilian Conservation Corps], and we're going to put our young people in these camps. But again we do some arithmetic, and we find that we're going to spend each year just on room and board for each young person we help 4,700 dollars a year. We can send them to Harvard for 2,700! Course, don't get me wrong. I'm not suggesting Harvard is the answer to juvenile delinquency...

Yet anytime you and I question the schemes of the do-gooders, we're denounced as being against their humanitarian goals. They say we're always "against" things — we're never "for" anything.

Well, the trouble with our liberal friends is not that they're ignorant; it's just that they know so much that isn't so.

Now — we're for a provision that destitution should not follow unemployment by reason of old age, and to that end we've accepted Social Security as a step toward meeting the problem.

But we're against those entrusted with this program when they practice deception regarding its fiscal shortcomings, when they charge that any criticism of the program means that we want to end payments to those people who depend on them for a livelihood... A young man, 21 years of age, working at an average salary — his Social Security contribution would, in the open market, buy him an insurance policy that would guarantee 220 dollars a month at age 65. The government promises 127. He could live it up until he's 31 and then take out a policy that would pay more than Social Security. Now are we so lacking in business sense that we can't put this program on a sound basis, so that people who do require those payments will find they can get them when they're due — that the cupboard isn't bare?

Barry Goldwater thinks we can.

For 5 long years--from 1965 to 1970-the American worker was on a treadmill. His paycheck kept going up, but he was no better off. Year after year, wage increases bargained for him by his union or provided by his employer were eaten away by taxes and inflation, the result of too much Government spending in the sixties.

In the past 2 years, however, that picture has changed dramatically for the better. The real income of the average worker, after all Federal taxes and after inflation, is up a total of 6 percent. The days of the treadmill are over--the average workingman is now making real progress…

On this Labor Day, I would like to discuss with you some of the decisions you will be facing this year--decisions that will affect your job, your paycheck, and your future.

Today, this Nation is operating under a system that is rooted in the values that built America:
--We believe that an able-bodied person should earn what he gets and keep most of what he earns. We must stop increases in taxes before they reach the point that the American wage earner is working more for the Government than he is for himself.
--We believe it is wrong for someone on welfare to receive more than someone who works.
--We believe that a person's ability and ambition should determine his income, and that his income should not be redistributed by Government or restricted by some quota system.
--We believe that when Government tampers too much with the lives of individuals, when it unnecessarily butts into the free collective bargaining process, it cripples the private enterprise system on which the welfare of the worker depends…

[The] challenge to our values is serious, and it cannot be ignored. The person whose values are most directly threatened is the American worker, and it is up to the American worker to understand the nature of the challenge and to move strongly to turn it back. We are faced this year with the choice between the "work ethic" that built this Nation's character and the new "welfare ethic" that could cause that American character to weaken.

Let's compare the two:

The work ethic tells us that there is really no such thing as "something for nothing," and that everything valuable in life requires some striving and some sacrifice. The work ethic holds that it is wrong to expect instant gratification of all our desires, and it is right to expect hard work to earn a just reward. Above all, the work ethic puts responsibility in the hands of the individual, in the belief that self-reliance and willingness to work make a person a better human being.

The welfare ethic, on the other hand, suggests that there is an easier way. It says that the good life can be made available to everyone right now, and that this can be done by the Government. The welfare ethic goes far beyond our proper concern to help people in need. It sees the Government, not the person, as the best judge of what people should do, where they should live, where they should go to school, what kind of jobs they should have, how much income they should be allowed to keep.

The choice before the American worker is clear: The work ethic builds character and self-reliance, the welfare ethic destroys character and leads to a vicious cycle of dependency. The work ethic builds strong people. The welfare ethic breeds weak people. This year, you are not only going to choose the kind of leadership you want, you are going to decide what kind of people Americans will be.

Let me give you three specific examples of the difference between the work ethic and the welfare ethic, and how the choice directly affects your life.

The believers in the welfare ethic think it is unfair for some people to have much more income than others. They say we should begin right away to redistribute income, so that we can reduce the number of poor and bring about that day when everybody has much closer to the same income.
I believe that a policy of income redistribution would result in many more Americans becoming poor, because it ignores a human value essential to every worker's success—the incentive of reward.

It's human nature for a person who works hard for a living to want to keep most of what he earns, and to spend what he earns in the way he wants. Now, some may call this work ethic selfish or materialistic, but I think it is natural for a worker to resent seeing a large chunk of his hard-earned wage taken by Government to give to someone else who may even refuse to work.

The people who advocate the welfare ethic spend their time discussing how to cut up the pie we have, but those who believe in the work ethic want to bake a bigger pie, and I'm for baking that bigger pie...

Let me give you a second example of the challenge to our traditional values that is being made today. It shows how well-intentioned people, who believe that a paternal government in Washington can solve everything, can defeat their own good purposes by refusing to recognize the realities of human nature.

I am talking about the involuntary busing of schoolchildren away from their neighborhoods for the purpose of achieving racial balance. We have come a long way in the past 4 years in ending segregation in this country. Just as important, we have done it without the riots, without the bitterness, without the hatred that plagued this Nation during the sixties. We're getting where we want to go in a way that permits understanding and friendship to grow instead of prejudice and fear.

But that steady progress does not satisfy everyone. The master planners who want more power in a central government believe they know what is best for the welfare of every locality. They fail to see how their zeal sets back the cause of good race relations, of orderly desegregation, and of quality education.

Busing for racial balance is a mistake because it runs counter to a basic American value—the interest of parents in sending their children to a neighborhood school. When an American family thinks of moving to a different home, when they think of buying a house, the first question parents ask is "What are the schools like in this neighborhood?"

And they ask that question because they want the best quality education possible for their children. That's a bedrock interest. You don't run roughshod over that interest in a country that values personal freedom and close family ties.

Our children are America's most priceless national asset. We must not allow them to be used as pawns in the hands of social planners in Washington, many of whom basically believe that children should be raised by the Government rather than by their parents...

Does the American workingman want to turn over a large part of his economic freedom, including much of his freedom to bargain collectively, to economic theorists who think they can permanently manage the economy with a system all their own?

Does the American workingman want to turn over his power of decision on how he lives his life and spends his earnings to a powerful central government? Does he want to trade away opportunity for the false promise of government security? Does the American workingman want his country to become militarily weak and morally soft? That is certainly not in the tradition of American labor.
Phyllis Schlafly, Interview with the *Washington Star* about the Equal Rights Amendment, January 18, 1976.

**Question:** What do you make of the recent setbacks of the Equal Rights Amendment and the defeat of the state equal rights amendments in New York and New Jersey?

**Schlafly:** I think they show that despite the fact that the proponents had nearly 100 percent of the press on their side, and despite the fact that they had nearly 100 percent of the politicians who cared to commit themselves on their side, nevertheless the voters recognized ERA as a fraud, and they're against it. They recognize it as a takeaway of women's rights; they recognize it won't do anything good for women, and so they're against it.

**Q:** Why do you feel that if women got legal equality, say in New York, it would take away their rights?

**Schlafly:** The New York state support law is a beautiful law. It says the husband must support his wife, and the husband must support their minor children under age 21. It's perfectly obvious that when you apply the ERA to that law, it becomes immediately unconstitutional. So ERA will take away the right of the wife to be supported and to have her minor children supported. Obviously, this is an attack on the rights of the wife and on the family. The principal thing that ERA does is to take away the right of the wife in an ongoing marriage, the wife in the home.

**Q:** Do you think that that is the reason men support their wives, because it's the law?

**Schlafly:** Yes, I do. Because it is their duty, and I think duty is an honorable word. When men get married they know that they are taking on the duty of supporting their wives.

**Q:** Do you think that women today really are getting married to be supported?

**Schlafly:** Even if you think that in the future the law should be changed, I think it is a gross invasion of the property rights of women in existing marriages to come along and say, "Now as a new principle of law-no matter that you went into marriage 10, 20, 30, 40 years ago, thinking that the marriage contract meant a definite relationship-too bad, sister. You're on your own now." And that's what they're saying.

**Q:** You see it happening that the wife at some point would have to support the husband?

**Schlafly:** She would be equally liable for the financial support.

**Q:** What's wrong with that?

**Schlafly:** What's wrong with that? Because you can't make the having of babies equally shared. I think our laws are entitled to reflect the natural differences and the role assigned by God, in that women have babies and men don't have babies. Therefore, the wife has the right to support, and the husband has the duty to pay for the groceries on the table. Anything that ERA does to that is a takeaway of what she has now. It's a reduction in those rights. And even if you want to discuss alimony or child support or divorced women, in any state where alimony is something that goes only from husband to wife, which is half the states, ERA knocks it out, because it isn't equal.

**Q:** You mean the women might have to pay alimony.

**Schlafly:** Sure, that's right. And the proponents say this is what they want.

**Q:** Well, do you really see anything wrong with a woman paying alimony if she has the money and her husband doesn't?

**Schlafly:** The thing that's so fraudulent about ERA is that it is presented as something which will benefit women, which will lift women out of this second-class citizenship, this oppression that they've allegedly been in for the last 200 years. The proponents cannot show any single way that ERA is going to benefit women.

**Q:** You are also against the women's movement?

**Schlafly:** I certainly am.

**Q:** Why is that?
Schlafly: I think it is destructive and antifamily. I think their goals can be summed up as, first, for ERA, which is a takeaway of the legal rights that wives now have. Second, it is pro-abortion on demand, and government-financed abortion and abortion in government hospitals or any hospitals. Third, it's for state nurseries, to get the children in the nurseries and off the backs of the mothers. Fourth, it is for prolesbian legislation, which is certainly an antimarriage movement. And fifth, it is for changing the school textbooks in order to eliminate what they call the stereotype of woman in the home as wife and mother. So I consider that all five of their principle objectives are antifamily.

Q: Do you think that women would be as well off today were it not for the women's movement?

Schlafly: I certainly do. There were more women in Congress prior to the women's movement than there are today.

Q: Well, haven't there been a lot of other gains, though? There are many more women working today and a lot of them are getting better salaries too.

Schlafly: And a lot of them who are working would prefer to be in the home. They are working for economic reasons.

Q: But if they have to work then it's important that they make as much money as they can, at least as much as men, for what they are doing. . .

Schlafly: I believe in equal pay for equal work. I do not believe in hiring unqualified women over qualified men to remedy some alleged oppression of 25 years ago. . . .

Q: Do you think that people are being forced to hire this way?

Schlafly: Yes, we had a good example of that recently in a federal court a ruling that has ordered the Chicago Police Department to hire 16 percent women, on a quota. Now in order to do this they have got to throw out the physical qualifications that are required to be a policeman on the Chicago police force. And I feel this is absolutely wrong. It's hurtful to men, it's hurtful to women, and it's hurtful to the community. And it will do nothing but demoralize and destroy the police force.

Q: You think the women will not be able to perform the job as well as men?

Schlafly: That's correct. The same thing's true in the military. There is an honorable place for women in the military. They have the best of both worlds in the military today. They are protected from combat service and from some of the dangerous and unpleasant jobs in the military. I feel that ERA, which would require identical treatment in combat, and in the draft the next time we have one of these wars is hurtful to everybody. It's hurtful to the defense of our country, it's terribly hurtful to our young women, it's hurtful to the women who want to make a career in the military and it's hurtful to the men.

Q: Don't you think that the women who want to be in the service should be the ones to make that decision?

Schlafly: You mean the decision as to whether they go into combat? No, I certainly don't. I think the purpose of the military is to defend our country in battle. The purpose is not to provide on-the-job training for somebody who thinks she wants a fun career with a lot of men around.

Q: You feel that women need to be protected in many ways?

Schlafly: I feel that there are physical differences between men and women. The women's lib movement establishes as dogma that there is no difference between men and women except the sex organs I think this is nonsense.

So I tell you there are a great many God-fearing, dedicated, noble men and women in public life, present company included. And yes, we need your help to keep us ever mindful of the ideas and the principles that brought us into the public arena in the first place. The basis of those ideals and principles is a commitment to freedom and personal liberty that, itself, is grounded in the much deeper realization that freedom prospers only where the blessings of God are avidly sought and humbly accepted. The American experiment in democracy rests on this insight.

I want you to know that this administration is motivated by a political philosophy that sees the greatness of America in you, her people, and in your families, churches, neighborhoods, communities—the institutions that foster and nourish values like concern for others and respect for the rule of law under God.

Now, I don’t have to tell you that this puts us in opposition to, or at least out of step with, a prevailing attitude of many who have turned to a modern-day secularism, discarding the tried and time-tested values upon which our very civilization is based. No matter how well intentioned, their value system is radically different from that of most Americans. And while they proclaim that they’re freeing us from superstitions of the past, they’ve taken upon themselves the job of superintending us by government rule and regulation. Sometimes their voices are louder than ours, but they are not yet a majority.

An organization of citizens, sincerely motivated and deeply concerned about the increase in illegitimate births and abortions involving girls well below the age of consent, some time ago established a nationwide network of clinics to offer help to these girls and, hopefully, alleviate this situation. Now, again, let me say, I do not fault their intent. However, in their well-intentioned effort, these clinics have decided to provide advice and birth control drugs and devices to underage girls without the knowledge of their parents.

Well, we have ordered clinics receiving federal funds to notify the parents such help has been given. . . . I’ve watched TV panel shows discuss this issue, seen columnists pontificating on our error, but no one seems to mention morality as playing a part in the subject of sex.

Is all of Judeo-Christian tradition wrong? Are we to believe that something so sacred can be looked upon as a purely physical thing with no potential for emotional and psychological harm? . . .

Many of us in government would like to know what parents think about this intrusion in their family by government. We’re going to fight in the courts. The right of parents and the rights of family take precedence over those of Washington-based bureaucrats and social engineers.

But the fight against parental notification is really only one example of many attempts to water down traditional values and even abrogate the original terms of American democracy. Freedom prospers when religion is vibrant and the rule of law under God is acknowledged. When our Founding Fathers passed the First Amendment, they sought to protect churches from government interference. They never intended to construct a wall of hostility between government and the concept of religious belief itself.

The evidence of this permeates our history and our government. The Declaration of Independence mentions the Supreme Being no less than four times. “In God We Trust” is engraved on our coinage. The Supreme Court opens its proceedings with a religious invocation. And the members of Congress open their sessions with a prayer. I just happen to believe the schoolchildren of the United States are entitled to the same privileges as Supreme Court justices and congressmen.

Last year, I sent the Congress a constitutional amendment to restore prayer to public schools. Already this session, there’s growing bipartisan support for the amendment, and I am calling on the Congress to act speedily to pass it and to let our children pray.

More than a decade ago, a Supreme Court decision literally wiped off the books of fifty states statutes protecting the rights of unborn children. Abortion on demand now takes the lives of up to one and a half million unborn children a year. Human life legislation ending this tragedy will someday pass the Congress, and you and I must never rest until it does.
Unless and until it can be proven that the unborn child is not a living entity, then its right to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness must be protected. . . .

Now, I’m sure that you must get discouraged at times, but you’ve done better than you know, perhaps. There’s a great spiritual awakening in America, a renewal of the traditional values that have been the bedrock of America’s goodness and greatness.

One recent survey by a Washington-based research council concluded that Americans were far more religious than the people of other nations; 95 percent of those surveyed expressed a belief in God and a huge majority believed the Ten Commandments had real meaning in their lives. And another study has found that an overwhelming majority of Americans disapprove of adultery, teenage sex, pornography, abortion, and hard drugs. And this same study showed a deep reverence for the importance of family ties and religious belief.

I think the items that we’ve discussed here today must be a key part of the nation’s political agenda. For the first time the Congress is openly and seriously debating and dealing with the prayer and abortion issues—and that’s enormous progress right there. I repeat: America is in the midst of a spiritual awakening and a moral renewal…

There is sin and evil in the world, and we’re enjoined by Scripture and the Lord Jesus to oppose it with all our might. Our nation, too, has a legacy of evil with which it must deal. The glory of this land has been its capacity for transcending the moral evils of our past. For example, the long struggle of minority citizens for equal rights, once a source of disunity and civil war, is now a point of pride for all Americans. We must never go back. There is no room for racism, anti-Semitism, or other forms of ethnic and racial hatred in this country.

I know that you’ve been horrified, as have I, by the resurgence of some hate groups preaching bigotry and prejudice. Use the mighty voice of your pulpits and the powerful standing of your churches to denounce and isolate these hate groups in our midst. The commandment given us is clear and simple: “Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself.” But whatever sad episodes exist in our past, any objective observer must hold a positive view of American history, a history that has been the story of hopes fulfilled and dreams made into reality. Especially in this century, America has kept alight the torch of freedom, but not just for ourselves but for millions of others around the world.

And this brings me to my final point today. During my first press conference as president, in answer to a direct question, I pointed out that, as good Marxist-Leninists, the Soviet leaders have openly and publicly declared that the only morality they recognize is that which will further their cause, which is world revolution. . . .

Well, I think the refusal of many influential people to accept this elementary fact of Soviet doctrine illustrates a historical reluctance to see totalitarian powers for what they are. We saw this phenomenon in the 1930s. We see it too often today.

This doesn’t mean we should isolate ourselves and refuse to seek an understanding with them. I intend to do everything I can to persuade them of our peaceful intent, to remind them that it was the West that refused to use its nuclear monopoly in the forties and fifties for territorial gain and which now proposes a 50-percent cut in strategic ballistic missiles and the elimination of an entire class of land-based, intermediate-range nuclear missiles.

At the same time, however, they must be made to understand we will never compromise our principles and standards. We will never give away our freedom. We will never abandon our belief in God. And we will never stop searching for a genuine peace. But we can assure none of these things America stands for through the so-called nuclear freeze solutions proposed by some.

The truth is that a freeze now would be a very dangerous fraud, for that is merely the illusion of peace. The reality is that we must find peace through strength…

The President's Commission on Privatization was established on September 2, 1987, "to review the appropriate division of responsibilities between the federal government and the private sector," and to identify those government programs that are not properly the responsibility of the federal government or that can be performed more efficiently by the private sector...

The following are summaries of the Commission's findings and recommendations in each area:

Low-Income Housing

Rather than financing new public housing construction, the government should provide housing subsidies to eligible low-income households in the form of vouchers enabling them to rent acceptable housing in the private marketplace. To the greatest extent possible existing public housing should either be sold to or managed by the residents. By giving residents a larger stake in their own housing by selling it to them, contracting with them to manage it, or by allowing them discretion in choosing it through a voucher program, the long-term quality of their housing will be improved at a lower cost per household.

Housing Finance

The federal government should assume a more neutral position with respect to direct housing finance programs. In addition, the federal government should refocus the mortgage insurance activity of the Federal Housing Administration so that it does not compete as directly with private mortgage insurers. Rather, it should direct its efforts, as originally intended, toward home buyers who have been turned down by private insurers. Similarly, the Federal National Mortgage Association and, by extension, the Federal Home Loan Mortgage Corporation, should not be allowed to compete on an unfair basis, and thus should be fully privatized, including the elimination of all federal benefits and limitations....

Air Traffic Control and Other FAA Functions

The FAA should continue to regulate the national airspace system for the foreseeable future for reasons of safety, public service, and efficiency. However, portions of that system can and should be considered for private operation or for contracting, when such options would improve air commerce. In this regard, the federal government should reduce its direct role in the development of airports, by encouraging each airport to develop its own sources of funding from the full range of beneficiaries of aviation services. In particular, the portion of national airport and airway expenditures borne by users should be increased....

Educational Choice

The federal government should foster choice options, including the use of vouchers to achieve the nation's full range of educational goals. Congress should adopt policies to increase parental choice in education at the elementary and secondary levels just as it now fosters choice in higher education through GI Bill payments and Pell Grants...The federal government should encourage choice programs targeted to individuals in the lower percentiles of the current elementary and secondary student population. The schools are failing these children now, and alternatives beyond current programs should be explored...

Postal Service

The private express statutes, which mandate the postal monopoly, should be repealed to allow competition in the provision of any and all postal services. The benefits conferred by competition, in terms of quality of service, cost efficiency, and the incentives for innovation clearly outweigh the costs of transition to a free market...Similarly, the restrictions on private delivery of urgent mail should be loosened and the prohibition on private use of letter boxes should be repealed immediately. At the same time, the Postal Service should more actively pursue contracting out opportunities in all its functions and ensure highest and best use of all its assets.
Contracting Out

The federal government should not compete with the private sector in the provision of commercially available goods and services. Contracting out through the competitive bidding process should be pursued more aggressively through the Executive Branch as a means to procure the same or better level of service at a reduced cost...

MILITARY COMMISSARIES

Private sector businesses should participate in managing and operating military commissaries in the United States in order to achieve greater efficiency through competitive stimulus.

PRISONS

Contracting the administration of jails and prisons at the federal, state, and local levels could lead to improved, more efficient operation. Problems of liability and accountability should not be seen as posing insurmountable obstacles to contracting for the operation of confinement facilities, although Constitutional and legal requirements apply.

MEDICARE

Private sector competition, by means of vouchers, in the provision of health care financing (health insurance or HMOs) for the elderly can impart critically needed cost-containment incentives in this market and offer a broader choice of health plan options. The government should act to increase competition and private sector participation in health care financing under Medicare by encouraging the use of vouchers or capitated payments to purchase private health care financing. Since the private sector is naturally reluctant to assume greater risk without compensating benefits, some risk-sharing plan, such as the use of risk-corridors, should be considered in the implementation of any voucher system.