

Matthew D. Hutcheson has been called “America’s Greatest Citizen” and “America’s Unlikely Hero.” Hutcheson was sent to prison on manufactured, politically motivated charges to extinguish his growing influence and to destroy his life’s work. Prison did not diminish Hutcheson’s light; it made it brighter. Hutcheson was not destroyed—he is stronger. Prison has prepared him to be one of the “greatest leaders America has ever had.” If you want to know whether America is good or bad, or whether you should defend or be ashamed of her, your life is about to change forever. Find out what millions of other Americans already know . . .
Why America is Great!



Matthew is a beacon of light. To say this guy is good is a huge understatement. He is fabulous and blessed. You are about to read one of the most important books ever written about the greatness of America, and it was written in a cold, dark, damp, prison cell. This book will fill you with unspeakable gratitude for your American citizenship.”

—John Lamar Jenkins,
keynote speaker, author, life and business coach



★ WHY AMERICA IS GREAT!

★ Matthew D. Hutcheson

MACH 6 PRESS

FROM THE AUTHOR WHO BROUGHT YOU
SOMETHING TO THINK ABOUT



WHY AMERICA IS GREAT!

MATTHEW D. HUTCHESON

Praise for Matthew D. Hutcheson's

WHY AMERICA IS GREAT!

“A voice of reason in these convoluted times. With so many (individuals, organizations, the media) trying to distort facts, bend history, and tarnish the name of this great country, we need this book of truths to shine a light on reality.”

—Craig Chisholm

“It was my privilege to speak with Mr. Hutcheson in person while much of this book was being written. Everything in the book comes straight from his heart and soul.”

—Johnny Trevino, Jr.

“The man who can finally unify and heal our nation is sitting in prison. His name is Matthew D. Hutcheson and he is my good friend. He won't be in prison forever, and when he is released, he will become one of the greatest leaders America has ever known.”

—Michael “Harry-O” Harris

Founder of Death Row Records

“I understand Matthew D. Hutcheson at a level few other human beings do. He and I formed an unbreakable bond

of brotherhood in the crucible of pain and suffering. The greatness of this book reveals the greatness of its author. Could you write such things in prison? Could you write such things at all? Matthew D. Hutcheson will forever be remembered in the annals of history as one of America's greatest citizens. Wait and see. There are men who seek to become legends. Some are ordained legends during creation."

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"Freedom makes me happy. Freedom is what makes America great. Never, ever do something that causes your freedom to be taken away."

—Andrew Montalvo

"Matthew D. Hutcheson's writings on the greatness of America have reoriented my thinking and inspired me with patriotism."

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“What every American needs right now.”

—Austin Ray

“We believe [this book] will be one of the most important explanations of liberty and America you will ever read.”

—Jerry L. Melchisedeck, Sr., Lt Col USAF (Ret)

—Jay Inman, Lt Col US Army (Ret)

—Robert Gilbeau, Fmr. Rear Admiral US Navy (Ret)

—Lee Ofner, DDS

WHY AMERICA IS GREAT!



ALSO BY MATTHEW D. HUTCHESON

Quinny

Hero

Capitalism vs. Socialism

In Defense of America

Friendship

The Experience

Something to Think About

True American



WHY AMERICA IS GREAT!

MATTHEW D. HUTCHESON



This book resides in the following BISAC categories:

Political Science / Political Freedom

Political Science / Civics & Citizenship



BelloHutch

For more about Matthew D. Hutcheson and other writings, visit www.bellohutch.com

In Latin, *bello* means “fight for.”
BelloHutch@gmail.com



Mach 6 Press

mach6llc@gmail.com

Edited by Kirsten Martineau and Lee Ofner, DDS

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*This book is dedicated to my 97-year-old friend and
WWII hero Aston Dale (Dee) Mainard.*

*America is great because of those, like Dee Mainard, who
have risked or given their lives to defend her. If America
is not great, and never has been, why bother defending
her at all? Every American cringes at the thought of
having his or her liberty taken away, even by those few
whose mouths spew anti-American words without un-
derstanding. The mere fact that we can discuss the things
in this book proves just how great America is.*

*Aston Dale (Dee) Mainard, 2nd Lieutenant, United States
Army Air Corps (prior to the creation of the United
States Air Force), defended America from murderous
foreign aggressors from 1942 through 1945. Those ag-
gressors did not value liberty and literally sought to take
it away from every American. Lieutenant Mainard—and
hundreds of thousands like him—would not have it.*

*God bless Lieutenant Mainard and those of the Greatest
Generation who defended us from foreign enemies.*

*God bless the rising generation who must stand up now
to defend us from domestic ones.*

WHY AMERICA IS GREAT!



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FOREWORD



Matthew D. Hutcheson is one of my most trusted and beloved friends.

I know that I am one of his also.

We met under the most extreme conditions one can imagine. We have both experienced the pain of prejudice, false accusation, oppression, and abuse at the hands of other Americans. We have similar professional training. We know how things should be in America. We have talked about it at length. We have had those types of conversations all Americans should be having right now . . . conversations that are real, raw, and vulnerable—but first and foremost—respectful. Matthew knows my heart. He knows my soul. I know his. We trust each other with our lives.

With that introduction, you should know that I am black.

Matthew is white.

Yet, race means nothing to either of us.

I wish relationships like ours were more common.

It is quite imperative that all Americans understand that to most black people, or minorities in general, America has not felt great to them. Was slavery great for them? How about denying women the right to vote? What about wage disparity between white men and men of color? Or what about between men and women generally? What about the grinding and ever present feeling black people have that most white people despise them? Whether it is actually true is not the point. The point is that it *seems* that way and we are reminded of it every evening when we watch the news.

Let us just be honest. You may say, “Oh, not me!” Such a comment is fine for someone to say, but that perceived white sentiment seems pervasive enough, and supported by a sufficient number of continuing incidents and experiences, that the grinding feeling blacks have just will not go away no matter how hard we try to ignore it or “get over it,” as we so often hear.

It is deeply saddening to me.

This sentiment is a progress-obstacle which America has not honestly faced. Even now, in 2020, with all the protests, some of which have turned violent, it sometimes seems that racial understanding has barely improved since racial strife began.

You may be thinking to yourself, “This is a strange introduction to a book titled ‘Why America is Great!’”

I understand completely.

However, let me explain.

America is many things.

It is a geographical place.

It is a sovereign nation.

It is an idea and an ideal.

It is a collective of citizens who embrace common values.

America is all those things, but it is *not* “racist,” notwithstanding the challenges that exist between certain individuals, groups, or institutions. I make this statement with confidence, even though sometimes it really seems like America as a whole just might be racist.

Racism simply does not comport with America in any of its forms or definitions because racism is a deviation from what our Founding Fathers envisioned. America is no more racist than an entire family is criminal because one of its members is embroiled in trouble. Sometimes, a single family member can err, but that error does not define the entire family. At least, it should not. Likewise, the sad views of some Americans toward certain fellow citizens does not define all of America, notwithstanding the efforts of some with an agenda to frame the issue that way.

“But what about slavery?” you ask.

Slavery is a terrible—no—an absolutely horrifying part of Europe’s colonization past. America was once a British colony. Slavery was introduced to the new world by Europeans. The Dutch, the Portuguese, the British, and others were slave traders. Slavery was not under the ideals set forth under the United States Declaration of

Independence, the Constitution, and the Bill of Rights. The America we all love—or hope to love—ended slavery. Its end was a great thing. As Matthew explains in the following pages, the slave trade was criminalized by the United States Congress not long after the United States Constitution was ratified and adopted by the states. For the times back then, it was criminalized at “breakneck speed.” Slave ownership was finally abolished in 1863. Most Americans at the time actually wanted slavery to be abolished much sooner. The conflict between those who abhorred slavery and those who wanted to preserve it resulted in one of the most gruesomely violent wars ever fought in the history of mankind. It was because America was great that thousands upon thousands of white American men and boys gave their lives so slaves could be free.

It is true that some American individuals still harbor dislike, prejudice, or even hatred towards people of color, and/or women. This attitude is not harmonious with America, the ideal. Increasingly, white Americans are offended by racism. I know Matthew is. I know Matthew’s family is. Most Americans are offended by the oppression of women. Matthew has a wife, two daughters, a mother, and five sisters—all of whom he treats with the utmost respect and reverence. I know how offended he

is by gender bias.

As you will see from Matthew's writings, most Americans today do not embrace oppression or discrimination. You may be surprised to learn that Americans at the time of America's founding, especially America's Founding Fathers, first and foremost believed in liberty and justice for all, including slaves and women. They meant it then. More and more Americans mean it now. They fought against injustice then and it must have seemed at times to be a fight they just could not win. We are still fighting injustice over two centuries later, but do not believe for a moment we are not making progress.

The fight for equality is righteous and must continue. There are yet too many Americans who mistreat blacks, Natives, Hispanics, Asians, Middle-Easterners, women, LGBTQ, and other minorities unfairly. One is too many. It is despicable. But do not attack an entire family for its struggling and confused child. Do not condemn good parents for the tragic acts of a child who was taught correctly.

So, why is America great?

Because the idea of America requires liberty and

justice for all. We the people expect each other to embrace and live the idea. We expect each other to see the obvious (the self-evident)—that we were created equal—and that we should treat *and feel* it toward one another. When we fail to live up to this expectation, we are expected to remind each other. Sometimes through soft words. Sometimes through protests. The mere option to protest is also more evidence of America's greatness and destiny to become ever more nearly perfect.

In conclusion, one should not believe the fallacy that America cannot be great because it has problems. Parents, or an entire family, can still be great even though they have a family member who struggles. America may always have work to do, and as long as work is needed, work should be done. Change happens in small increments, in little nudges towards perfection. Demanding America to be “something” requires all its citizens to commit to live on a higher plane, especially those demanding the improvement. If we want America to be better, we all have to be better in every respect, not just one.

Every discussion, every respectful interaction, every tragedy, and every righteous protest helps us to arrive there. That America has the potential for being perfect someday is the definition of its being great. No other

nation on earth offers that possibility quite like America does. Therefore, America is also special.

We all feel.

We all breathe.

We all matter.

Some of us need to matter more at certain times to help everyone else understand. It is not only great, but the fact that we can acknowledge it is yet more evidence of America's greatness.

Right now, "We the People" are testing the truth that America is great. No one should be surprised that when America's institutions, or groups, encroach upon, or obstruct, the pursuit of others' happiness, this testing will immediately begin, which it should.

What have we discovered by this testing? That we can challenge America's greatness—or demand that it be better—without diminishing it in the least. In fact, by challenging America's greatness, it only becomes greater. We should not be disappointed that improvement is made in small increments, which is also how improvement is

made to each of our individual lives.

Finally, when we fail, we should collectively admit it, humbly, and change. Holy writ calls it “repentance.” Sometimes societies as a whole need to repent and it is a good thing. When we collectively repent, those who have been injured should forgive. Repentance and forgiveness can be very, very difficult. But it is what citizens of great nations do. The greatness of the nation depends on it. Great Americans show love even though love may have been withheld from them unjustly.

We have before us an opportunity of historic proportions, an opportunity to overcome very difficult circumstances and, until now, unrelenting societal tensions. In many nations, it is not even possible to address a problem at all. In many nations, there is no hope for even tiny incremental improvement. Many nations have not changed much in thousands of years. America is a shining example of change and improvement, especially after we fall short.

I now give to you the amazing and healing words of Matthew D. Hutcheson. This man will one day become one of the greatest leaders America has ever had. In the chapters that follow, Matthew explains why America is

great in the most unique and interesting way. Much of the book was written in prison. Many chapters consist of memorializations of actual, fascinating conversations with other inmates. Matthew explains that even the most oppressed among us should hold tight to the American promise, not abandon it, as that oppression would not be any less somewhere else . . . it would be greater.

You are about to read and understand, perhaps, for the very first time, why America is great. I truly hope this book touches your life as it has mine, and I hope you share it with everyone you know.

—JOHN LAMAR JENKINS, JD

PART I

In Defense of America

The pages you are about to read were written by Matthew D. Hutcheson under the extreme conditions of federal prison between June 11, 2017 and July 6, 2019. These writings include updates from prison to Matthew's family and friends memorializing experiences and conversations. Each memorialization was written without source materials and has been edited and converted from emails by Jay Inman, Lt. Colonel, US ARMY (Ret.).

Respectfully submitted,

Jerry L. Melchisedeck, Sr., Lt Col USAF (Ret)
Jay Inman, Lt Col US Army (Ret)
Robert Gilbeau, Fmr. Rear Admiral US Navy (Ret)
Lee Ofner, DDS
John Jenkins, JD

THE AMERICAN HYPOTHESIS

June 11, 2017



“The American Hypothesis” was written on June 11, 2017 by Matthew D. Hutcheson for a fellow inmate’s college class while at FCI Lompoc, California. It was later published by TED.com and more recently in the Microsoft® Educator Center blog on 09/25/2019.

THERE ARE TWO LOCAL colleges here (I think both are out of Santa Barbara) which offer associate degrees in a variety of subjects. The classes are usually full. In prison, every societal and cultural status is represented. There are rich and poor. There are educated and ignorant. There are the English proficient and the “just learning.” There are Asians, Europeans, Africans, South Americans, Eskimos, Polynesians, and everyone in between. The entire continuum is represented in the classes of the local colleges.

One young man I met soon after I arrived here is Vietnamese. He goes by “John,” and one of the classes he is taking is American History 118.

He and I have become friends, but as you can imagine, language is a barrier. When coupled with a lack of knowledge of American history with which most of us grew up, it makes for a very stressful time for him in class.

The visiting professor, Professor Barker, gave the American history class an assignment. I paraphrase John’s understanding of the assignment:

“Given the political unrest in the United States, in light of a very acrimonious election, and in a seemingly chaotic change in administrations, and in all of the international wars and financial instability at home and abroad, please develop a reasonable hypothesis for the future of America.”

My friend John was overwhelmed with this assignment. He did not have a clue what to write. So, he hunted down his buddy “Hutch” and asked for some help.

He and I worked on it together. Here is John’s finished paper:

“If it is true that history repeats itself, then it is a plausible hypothesis that some (or perhaps all) of the historical scenarios considered in this course will occur again, in some form, in our immediate or long-term future. However, that thought is not the central idea in support of this short paper. My hypothesis revolves around a slightly different premise as follows:

‘The social, financial, and economic forces that shape today’s America are no different from those which have worked to impact the America of our past.’

Using this basic premise as my starting point, we find ourselves confronted with some largely general questions about what it is to be an American—and whether or not our collective perception of the “American Experience” has changed significantly over time. But more specifically (and more to the point of this paper), we might approach the subject of American history by asking another, yet more subtle question:

‘If the historical forces affecting America have at times been variable, then what constant of the ‘American Experience’ has allowed us to persist?’

I believe, as many others do, that it is the robust

nature of the United States Constitution—more than anything else—which has acted to propel America forward and to ensure her dynamic progress. The United States Constitution anchors Americans, one and all, to a unique and unalienable set of principles; principles that serve to hold up our enduring national ideology—principles which are far superior to those of any other civilized nation.

But, what do I have for proof, you may ask? Well, as with so many other points, the measure of a nation's greatness is often gauged by its finances. The United States, for example, leads the entire world in its steady and lavish production of gross domestic product—overmatching every competing country by an order of several magnitudes at least—including the out-producing of China by many, many trillions of dollars annually. Whether we attribute these facts to Divine Acts of Providence, or to the simple goodness of our founding principles (which are also given through Divine Providence), one point is absolutely certain: America not only persists through conflict, she seems to thrive upon it.

However, you may ask, 'Are we not living in especially dangerous times? Is the country not in an absolute state of peril, more so than at any other time in history?'

Well, frankly, the answer to that question is ‘no, not really.’ The America of today, if truth be told, is in no worse shape than she was ten, twenty, or even one hundred years ago. She is stronger and actually improving. Here is why:

We nearly lost the Revolutionary War on at least two separate occasions were it not for rogue winter storms that wrecked the Redcoats’ visibility in one instance and drove back their boats and warships in another. The Civil War was also nearly lost but for the Confederacy having misplaced its battle plans and strategic documents in an abandoned tent, later to be found by a Union scout.

These events are not luck. They are caused by a Being, more intelligent than and superior to us. We then conclude that this Supremely Intelligent and Benevolent Being wants America to exist and go on existing.

It might surprise most readers to know that America’s destiny has been absolutely littered by an almost bizarre series of impossibly close calls, extending far beyond those of our Revolutionary and Civil Wars. Further examples include the United States narrowly winning the race against Germany to construct World War II’s first atomic bomb—and in the 11th hour to break

the enigma code.

It is not the point of this short paper to showcase America's propensity for running a tight race—although she has done just that. The point here is to highlight America's iron-clad perseverance, which when considered in its proper historical context, has been absolutely miraculous.

So, what does history have to say, overall, about America? Is she good? Is she bad? Does Manifest Destiny actually exist, or was it all just a bit of excessive exuberance coupled with the coincidences and circumstances of the day? If we could pick just one universal trait to define our nation, what might that trait be? Although this last question is a tough one, to be sure, our nation has existed for long enough for us to have a good look at her pedigree—and she is, by all accounts, unique.

History has shown us, time and time again, that America's people are a diverse and complicated bunch. We are a multi-talented tapestry of enormous untapped potential, quietly surging, nearly glowing as we bend and sway against the political and economic wind gusts of the day.

It is precisely these qualities, a sense of unpredictability tempered with hope, that have somehow been infused into our Constitution (and are embodied there), stamping their manifest presence onto our destiny. Thus ordained, America has led us over, or through, almost every imaginable obstacle, surviving both reformation and greed, revolution and war—and as always, we will persist, we will adapt, we will prevail. America always will. It is the American Hypothesis.”

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INDEPENDENCE DAY 2019

July 6, 2019



A 2019 Independence Day message written by Matthew D. Hutcheson to family and friends of Matthew D. Hutcheson.

This message caught the attention of readers all over the world. It inspired other patriotic articles. Hutcheson was at FCI Englewood, Colorado at the time.

INTRODUCTION BY Dr. Lee Ofner:

Good Evening, All, and Happy Independence Day,

We have so much for which to be thankful. I have spoken frequently about my friend, Matt, who is incarcerated in federal prison in Littleton, CO. Matt is imprisoned on false charges and is guilty of nothing. Hopefully, justice will prevail soon, and he will then experience his freedom again. Please understand that Matt is not bitter. Matt is one of the most optimistic and joyful people I have

ever known. Even considering what the government, U.S. attorneys, prosecutors, etc., have done to Matt, he is a true patriot. Matt holds no grudges; he loves America. You can read it in his writings. Below, I have included a conversation Matt had with a fellow inmate earlier this week. Please feel free to share with anyone who may be inspired by his thoughts. I found this interchange to be very enlightening. There are revelations that I never knew. Among other talents, Matt is truly an educator, too. Please enjoy and I would love to hear your feedback. Thank you.

Dr. Lee Ofner

★ ★ ★

Dear Fam,

Happy Independence Day! I love America! I always have. Since I have been in prison, I have grown to love her even more.

This July 4th, I am going to recite a conversation I had with a 30-year-old about America and his misunderstanding about her. He has been “indoctrinated” with anti-American poison and I hope the conversation

helped clear some things up with him. By the way, prison is a breeding ground for every lie about America you can think of. (Hint to society: eliminate the breeding ground of those lies! I also recommend reading chapter 33 of *Quinny*, www.quinnythebook.com)

Here is how the conversation went:

Young Man: “I hate America. When I am released, I am going to leave the United States and never come back!”

Me: Silence for a moment, and then: “It is too bad. But I guess it is best because America needs people who will produce results for society by providing stability, building trust with friends, family, and neighbors; those with whom you come in contact should never fear for their safety or well-being because you are around. Society expects every member to use his or her talents to produce goods or offer services which make peoples’ lives better. You are right. You are unable to do any of it, so it is best that you leave.”

Young Man: “What the? Just who do you think you . . .”

[He stopped for a moment and considered his reaction. If he hates America so much, why does he even care what I

said? The truth is he loves her, too! Everyone does! There is a reason. America loves us! She gives us freedom. In the words of Daniel J. Boorstin, “Freedom means the opportunity to be what we never thought we would be.” Freedom alone makes things better than any government ever could. It is not the U.S. government which makes America great; it is the liberty the government is tasked to preserve which makes her great. Protecting liberty for its citizens is the government’s PRIMARY legitimate function.]

Me: “Yes, go ahead with your thought.”

Young Man: “Our nation was founded upon the evils of slavery. The Founding Fathers were evil. Thomas Jefferson was a rapist. He raped his slave, Sally Hemings.”

Me: “Who gave you that information?”

Young Man: “One of my professors from college. I’m not stupid. I went to college and have a degree.”

Me: “I commend you for that education. Good for you. Your professor told you an untruth, sorry.”

Young Man: “Are you calling my professor a liar?”

Me: “Yes.”

Young Man: “You are a [explicative].”

Me: “Sorry you feel that way, but your professor’s low self-esteem is manifesting as anger towards America. He does not really hate America. He hates himself or his life and projects it on America.”

Young Man: Silence.

Me: “Our Founding Fathers were great men. Very few men today can even scratch the surface of the depth of their character, bravery, and moral excellence. They were not racists. Thomas Jefferson was not a rapist.”

Young Man: “You are so full of [explicative]! You don’t know.”

Me: “Well, if I do not know, then neither do you. Mr. College, you just caught yourself in a logical contradiction. You realize it, right? Look, let us have a conversation. You do not need to curse at me every time I say something with which you disagree. How about we have an intellectual conversation like two dignified men? The more persuasive argument will be the one we both

embrace. Fair enough?”

Young Man: “I’m going to roast your [explicative]!”

Me: “No swearing!”

Young Man: “Sorry.”

Me: “Ok then. Let us talk about slavery. It is a terrible thing. The Founding Fathers were horrified by it.”

Young Man: “No, they weren’t! They loved it! They were slave owners!”

Me: “Being slave owners was an unfortunate reality of their day. It does not mean they loved owning other human beings.”

Young Man: “Prove it.”

Me: “Take George Washington, for example. In 1786 he wrote a letter to Robert Morse saying, “There is not a man living who wishes more sincerely than I do to see a plan adopted for the abolishment of slavery.””

Young Man: “I’ve never heard that before.”

Me: “It is part of American history. The letter is available for anyone to read with a little research.”

Young Man: “Then why did Washington have slaves?”

Me: “Like I said, it was the reality of their day. But they did not agree with it. Many Founding Fathers worried that if they freed their slaves, they would somehow end up re-enslaved with cruel and violent slave masters. Taking care of them and providing for them was the best they could do under the circumstances. There just was not an easy way to deal with the issue quickly. Those harsh realities were part of life at that time. It was not until 1863 that slavery was finally abolished. It cost hundreds of thousands of American lives. Americans took the slavery issue very seriously then, and we take it seriously now.”

Young Man: “But what about Jefferson?”

Me: “Jefferson wrote the Declaration of Independence.”

Young Man: “Right, I know that.”

Me: “I know you do. What most people do not know is that in the first edition of the Declaration which was proposed at the Second Continental Congress, it said

something like ‘King George waged cruel war against the life and liberty of a distant people (African slaves) who never offended him, capturing and carrying them into slavery in another hemisphere or to incur miserable death in their transportation. The King of Great Britain determined to keep open a slave market in which men should be bought and sold.’ Thomas Jefferson called it the ‘execrable commerce.’”

Young Man: “That’s not in the Declaration of Independence!”

Me: “Not anymore. But it was in the original version presented to the Continental Congress. Jefferson was forced to take it out when South Carolina and Georgia threatened to walk out of the Continental Congress unless that paragraph was removed. A sad but necessary compromise was made so that South Carolina and Georgia would remain part of the fight for liberty and independence. The Colonies would not have won the Revolutionary War without them.”

Young Man: “A little ironic, don’t you think, that slaves were the bargaining chip that saved the Colonies and made America possible?”

Me: “It is inspiring that the slaves enabled America to win, and by so doing, the slaves ultimately won their freedom for their posterity. It is one of the greatest comeback stories in the history of the world. Keep in mind, white men did not invent slavery. The slave trade goes back millennia. However, even more recently Muslim pirates from Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia, and Libya (from the sixteenth to the early-nineteenth century) captured over one million white Europeans and sold them into Muslim nations as slaves. No one talks about it. Thomas Jefferson’s autobiography (1821) said, ‘Nothing is more certainly written in the book of fate than that the slaves are to be free.’ This does not sound like someone who wants the slaves to remain slaves.”

Young Man: “He really said that?”

Me: “Yes, he did. You can look it up yourself. It is part of American history. It is only fair to put it into proper perspective. A scant 74 years passed from the time the United States became a sovereign nation in 1789 until slavery was finally abolished in 1863, which is extremely rapid social change for something of such a magnitude of importance, even for our day. It is yet another example of America’s moral exceptionalism in light of the nearly

300 years of slavery presided over by British rule which preceded it.

Young Man: “But he raped his slave, Sally Hemings.”

Me: Taking in a big breath and sighing loudly. “Thomas Jefferson’s wife was named Martha, just like George Washington’s wife.”

Young Man: “Interesting. I didn’t know that.”

Me: “Well, Martha Jefferson’s father took a second wife of sorts—perhaps more aptly called a ‘concubine.’ Anyway, Martha’s father had six children with his ‘concubine.’ Sally Hemings was number six.”

Young Man: [Jaw dropping]

Me: “You see, Martha Jefferson and Sally Hemings were half-sisters. After Martha Jefferson died, Hemings visited Jefferson in Paris while he was Ambassador to France. It was there that Hemings and Jefferson fell in love. In the law of Moses, men married the wives of their deceased brothers. Back then, it could easily mean marrying sisters. Jefferson knew Hemings was Martha Jefferson’s half-sister; he saw her and treated her that way. He loved her.

She loved him. They did not marry; they probably could not under the laws that prevailed at the time, but Jefferson might have married her upon his return from France if Virginia law had permitted it. It is telling that Hemings could have stayed in Paris in 1789 as a free woman but instead returned home with Jefferson because she loved him. He was no rapist. They had a relationship.”

Young Man: [Stunned; unable to respond.]

Me: “Even after Jefferson’s death, Hemings could have written down her story about how he ‘mistreated her’ if he actually had. Not one slave at Monticello ever even suspected there was anything but love and respect between them, or they, too, would have spoken out about it. Jefferson had children with Hemings. He could have easily sold them at birth to new slave owners if he were ashamed of them and wanted to hide the relationship, but he did not. He loved them.”

Young Man: “Then where did all of those rumors come from?”

Me: “A fellow by the name of James Callender was a journalist who did some work for Jefferson. He, at some point, wanted to become the postmaster for Richmond,

Virginia. He approached Jefferson to ask him to use his influence to help him obtain the job, but Jefferson refused to use his influence in that way. Callender was infuriated and spent the rest of his life making Jefferson's life miserable. The 'rest of his life' was only a year, though. While drunk, Callender fell off a bridge into a few feet of water and drowned. He was too drunk to stand up. Anyway, all of the negative 'Sally Hemings' rumors about rape and mistreatment started with that scoundrel, Callender."

Young Man: "I had no idea."

Me: "Thomas Jefferson really was all the man we hold him to be. He was the 'apostle of democracy' and the 'oracle of liberty.' What your professor told you was merely to recruit more members to the 'Holy Order of Perpetual Offense.' That term is not mine. I read it somewhere. But it is what professors are doing—they loathe their own lives, so they are recruiting others to join them in their perpetual state of offense. It is that simple."

Young Man: "You know, I'm starting to look at things differently."

Me: "America can claim moral superiority over all other

nations. It has the power to destroy ALL OTHER nations or assume control over them right now, but it does not. America is virtuous and benevolent. It provides economic relief to over 100 nations. Americans are the most generous people on earth. We produce the most. We create new things. We innovate and experiment. We find cures to diseases and share them with the world. We have revolutionized communications, travel, medical advancements, food production, water distribution, and more. All of those things originated here in America. Almighty God ordained our Founding Fathers to make it possible. You see, nothing makes a man's thoughts sharper than when he is under the threat of life or death. The belief that America could ultimately be what it is today threatened to deliver death to the Founding Fathers and their families, yet they persisted and prevailed. They were good men of excellent, superior moral virtue. Yes, they were human, and they made mistakes. In balance, when compared to all other great men throughout history, they measure out as the greatest who ever lived."

Young Man: "That actually sounds true. I believe you. But what about socialism? Several professors told me that socialism is necessary for America's future."

Me: "That position is ridiculous. Socialism is a man-made

construct. Capitalism, on the other hand, is naturally occurring. We can talk about the difference between the two some other time. For now, I will say, there have been few on earth who understood the evils of socialism more than Great Britain's Winston Churchill who said, 'Socialism is a philosophy of failure, the creed of ignorance, and the gospel of envy, its inherent virtue is the equal sharing of misery.'

Young Man: "Wow. That is an impressive quote."

Me: "Guess who Mr. Churchill (and all Europeans) can thank for surviving World War II to be able to make such a profound statement? The Americans."

Young Man: "I apologize for being such an [explicative] to you earlier."

Me: "No swearing!"

Young Man: "Sorry. I see now, our Founding Fathers were great, and they deserve the pedestal history has put them on."

Me: "Thank you for saying that. They were great. America is great. We are a great, loving, generous,

compassionate, creative, hardworking people. Why is America the greatest nation on earth? Why is it exceptional? It is simple. America enables her people to produce RESULTS.”

The young man shook my hand and seemed relieved to be American. I hope he always remembers.

I conclude these thoughts by sharing an excerpt from an article a friend mailed to me from Colorado Springs’ *The Gazette*. It is a partial quote by deceased politician, Dean Alfange:

“I will not trade my freedom for beneficence nor my dignity for a handout. I will never cower before any earthly master nor bend to any threat. It is my heritage to stand erect, proud and unafraid; to think and act myself, enjoy the benefit of my creations and to face the world boldly and say – ‘This, with God’s help, I have done.’ All this is what it is to be an American.”

It is as though those words were spoken by me in the first instance. God bless the United States of America.

Life in the Extreme,
Matt

★ ★ ★

This article can be found online at <http://bellohutch.com/independence-day-2019-in-defense-of-america/>

Matthew D. Hutcheson may be contacted through regular mail:

Matthew D. Hutcheson
14620-023
FCI Englewood
Satellite Camp
9595 West Quincy Avenue
Littleton, CO 80123

★ ★ ★

For those of you interested in some source material, you will enjoy the following:

Henry Wiencek's *Master of the Mountain: Thomas Jefferson and His Slaves*, chapter 1, Farrar Straus & Giroux, 2012, (Kindle location pg. 260–272).

The Women Jefferson Loved by Virginia Scharff, *Thomas Jefferson: The Revolution of Ideas* by R.B. Bernstein.

Christian Slaves, Muslim Masters: White Slavery in the Mediterranean, the Barbary Coast and Italy, 1500–1800 by Robert C. Davis (Palgrave Macmillan, 2003).

“Major Events in The Jefferson-Hemings Controversy,” Lehigh University Digital Library, 2012, (<http://digital.lib.lehigh.edu/trial/jefferson/time/>). See also “Sexual Liberties of Thomas Jefferson” by John L. Smith, Jr., *Journal of The American Revolution*, April 18, 2016.

Annette Gordon-Reed’s *Thomas Jefferson & Sally Hemings: An American Controversy*, chapter 5, University of Virginia Press, Second edition, 1999.

Peter Onuf, *Jeffersonian Legacies*, “Those Who Labor For My Happiness,” pg. 158, University of Virginia Press, 1993.

Letter from Martha Jefferson Randolph to Thomas Jefferson, November 30, 1804.

Race Hochdorf, “Thomas Jefferson & His Enemies,” <https://areomagazine.com/2017/09/07/thomas-jefferson-his-enemies>

Five thoughts on “Independence Day 2019” (from online commenter, John Jenkins)

July 9, 2019 at 9:26 AM

“I commend you Matthew. This is definitely an eye opener. After listening through viewing your words I could really see and remember through movies and stories from family members who were Freedom Riders and knew first hand that the fact is there were many slave owners who were not happy about owning slaves but did own slaves and protected them. It’s just an unfortunate situation that is in history.

We really do have many unfortunate situations that happen today and all we can do is stay prayed up and always seek a better path than before.”

FOUR PRINCIPLES THAT WILL CHANGE YOUR LIVES FOREVER

July 4, 2017



A 2017 Independence Day message written by Matthew D. Hutcheson to family and friends while at FTC Oklahoma City in transit to FCI La Tuna and then on to FCI Englewood, Colorado. This message affected the lives of dozens of inmates who had never heard anything like it then, and probably have not heard anything like it since. It has inspired other patriotic articles.

OKLAHOMA CITY, OK

Arriving at Victorville for the third time in around sixteen months was strange. The third time was less frightening. I had done it before, and everything was fine.

I was placed in a cell I had been in before. I had a decent mattress and interesting bunkies. Other than a fist

fight in the yard, which was quickly contained, not much happened at Victorville on my third stay.

After around two weeks, at 4 AM I was again instructed to pack up to leave. Once we boarded the bus, a fight broke out in the front row seats. Even though those guys were shackled, they still were able to throw elbows, head butts, and gouge with fingers. That fight was also broken up relatively quickly and the two inmates, with shirts torn and bloody, were escorted off the bus.

I just shook my head in disgust. There are some people who are violent before they come to prison. But most violent inmates become that way AFTER being in prison. Some have to fight to survive. It is so sad.

The ride from Victorville to the Orange County airport was uneventful. I admit that I am not 100% certain it was the Orange County airport—I heard someone say it was, so I am repeating here what I heard. The airport was not large. It looked like a municipal airport with some commercial activity. In any event, our bus drove onto the tarmac. There were seven large buses waiting. Shortly, the white Boeing 737 arrived with no other identifying markings other than a small round Department of Justice seal near the door and numbers on the tail.

The door opened and a frail internal aluminum auto-fold stairway was deployed from a compartment under the door. Inmates began to deplane. They waited on the tarmac for 10–15 minutes while we exited the buses and were loaded on the plane. We then could see the inmates on the tarmac entering the buses which we had just left. In all, there were over 100 inmates being exchanged.

Once the airplane door closed, we were instructed to put the window shade down. I wondered, for what reason? It could be any number of things, obviously all security related. Shortly, we were airborne, and I was, frankly, thrilled to experience the feeling of motion, gravity, speed, bumps, etc., again.

I dozed off for a while and then awakened when I felt the airplane's speed decrease in preparation for landing. Out the window I could see flat fields of grass and oak trees as far as the eye could see. "Where on earth was I?" I wondered.

It looked like Texas. Perhaps it was Oklahoma? The landing was really rough and once on the runway with brakes and engine reversers engaged, the airplane vibrated so severely that it made me very uncomfortable.

I have never felt that kind of vibration on any other flight I have been on.

We sat on the airplane in the summer heat, without water, for a very long time. Inmates were screaming for water. The U.S. Marshals would not provide any. They said they were off the clock now and they were waiting for their relief shift to arrive, so no water until then. “What does shift change have to do with basic humanity?” I thought.

After some number of hours, we were escorted off the airplane onto a sky bridge that was part of the prison itself. We were at the BOP Oklahoma transfer station. The transfer station is a 5-story high mega-prison-complex which can hold thousands of inmates. Hundreds come and go each week.

After waiting on benches in the sky bridge, we were eventually unshackled. (Keep in mind, it is probably 8 PM by this point and I have been shackled since 6 AM.)

My hands and feet were swollen and in excruciating pain. I was so dehydrated I could not speak to answer basic questions asked of me. Once unshackled, we were placed in a holding tank. We were given a lunch sack with

bologna, some cookies, and an apple, but still no water.

The guard said, “If you need a drink, get it out of the drinking fountain on the toilet.”

As part of the stainless-steel washbasin apparatus, a button can be pushed which sends the water upward like a drinking fountain—or that is what is supposed to happen. I pushed the button, but the water pressure was so low that only a dribble came out. I had to take my plastic bologna bag and fill it with water from the dribble because there was no way I was going to put my mouth down there to drink—especially given all of the vomit already in the sink. I complained to the guards about the conditions and they told me to “zip it or go to the SHU.” Gladly, I zipped it!

After several more hours in the holding tank, we were taken to R&D. Same drill—new clothes, the “interview,” medical intake forms, etc. Then, we were given a laundry bag with our bedding and we began to be escorted to our respective units.

I was placed on the 5th floor, unit A. It was called “5A.” By the time we arrived at our cells, it was around midnight. I immediately started filling my cup in the cell

sink and drank and drank and drank until I thought my stomach would burst.

I made my bed and drifted off to sleep. I was exhausted and in much pain.

My muscles were cramping due to dehydration and also due to the awkward position of being shackled for so long. After a while, I was able to gain control over my muscles through techniques I had learned in the Terminal Island SHU: breathing, slowing my heart rate, going into the zone. Off to sleep I went.

The following morning, the door opened at 5:45-ish. All the inmates lined up to get their breakfast trays—cold cereal, milk, fruit. After I ate, I emailed Annette. She had already seen from the BOP website that I had been transferred to Oklahoma. An email from her was waiting for me. Her email, in essence, said, “Oklahoma? What on earth is going on?” By reply, I informed her that I was being sent to La Tuna, El Paso, Texas.

In my email to Annette, I gave her a summary of the previous 24 hours. She, and many of you, launched an initiative with my two beloved senators to have me re-designated to the closer FCI Englewood, Colorado,

so my family could more easily visit.

The Oklahoma facility had two tiers of cells like Victorville, but instead of a single TV in the common area, there were four different TV rooms for the various races.

The white TV room was in a covered outside area with no air conditioning. It was in the outside area in which all inmates exercised. Think of it as a large carport. Two sides of the “carport” were cinder blocks painted rusty brown which rose from the slick polished cement floor to a corrugated metal ceiling about 20 feet above. One side were windows that looked back into the common area of the unit.

The telephones and email stations could be seen, along with all of the cells, through the windowed side. The fourth side was enclosed in large gauge wire fencing. Birds flew in and out of the fencing. Several bird families lived in the steel rafter beams of the “carport.” It was hot and muggy, just like Texas felt. The outside Oklahoma air was indiscernible from what I remembered Texas air smelling like—thick, hot, grass, wildflowers. It was July.

There was nothing to do in Oklahoma except sleep, read, watch TV, and do burpees in the “carport.” Many

inmates would gather around lunchroom tables in the unit at which inmates eat meals to talk and play cards. It did not take long for a group of inmates to start peppering me with questions.

“You stand out like a sore thumb. What’s your story?” said one inmate.

“I am coming from Lompoc. There was a riot there a few weeks back,” I said.

“How long were you at Lompoc?”

“Since December 2016.”

“Six months?”

“Yes, about right.”

“Where were you before that?”

“Safford, Arizona.”

“How long were you there?”

“About eight months.”

“What? They’ve got you on diesel therapy? Why?”

“Good question. Every time I have a hard court filing deadline, I am suddenly moved.”

“Man, they are doing you dirty, bro! They’re trying to prevent you from beating them—keeping your legal files in transit. We’ve seen that before,” as the small group nodded their heads in acknowledgment.

I nodded back.

They continued, “We noticed you. You don’t look like a sex offender. You have a dignified, educated look about you. You don’t look like a drug dealer because you have all of your teeth and have no tattoos. So, you must have been a banker or CEO. Are we close?”

“Yes, sort of, my case is white collar.”

“We knew it!”

One of the guys told me he was a former Olympic skier. He was the second Olympian I had met in prison. He was tangled up in selling drugs and his whole life—an excellent heroic American life—suddenly

ended in tragedy.

The other fellows told me about their situations, too—some tragic, others ordinary, and some simple crime-equals-punishment scenarios.

One of the inmates was a bona fide wise guy, a gangster associated with the mob. I was struck by how well he spoke, eloquently and persuasively, a skill he no doubt honed from a life on the streets.

One of the guys mentioned he had just come from Terminal Island. I asked him, “Do you know so-and-so?”

“Yes, I sure do!” he said.

I said, “He and I were friends. I heard he had been in the SHU, too.”

“He was in the SHU for about four months for some bogus, made-up charge. Hey, wait a minute! I just realized who you are! You’re HUTCH! Everyone talked about you at TI. You were in the SHU for made-up charges, too!”

Everyone stared at me, waiting for a reply.

“Yep, I am Hutch.”

“I can’t believe it! No way!” he exclaimed in excitement.

Curiosity got the best of more guys as they overheard the excited tone of the conversation. They came and sat down to join in.

The inmate from TI continued, “You were some type of politician, right?”

“Well, not exactly. I was not an elected official. I was a policy advisor to the United States House and Senate on financial markets. My work with Congress encompassed pensions, banking, insurance, and labor—meaning job preservation and/or creation.”

“Did you help them write bills?”

“Yep, I sure did, more than one.”

“That is incredible! Were you ever on TV?”

“Yes, more than once: nightly news, C-SPAN, Bloomberg TV.”

Silence, the guys were soaking it all in.

One inmate said, “Someone told me our nation is not a democracy. I always thought the United States was a democracy.”

“Our form of government is a ‘republic,’” I replied. “You know what ‘the public’ is, right? You, our families, me, . . . citizens of the United States.”

“Yes, we know what the public is.”

“Well, a republic is a ‘represented public.’ We have a government in which the public is represented by officers whom we elect from each state to represent the citizens of that state in Washington, D.C.”

“Oh, I see! If you put the ‘re’ in ‘represented’ and add it to ‘public,’ you get REPUBLIC!”

“Yes, that is a great way to understand what it means. But the word *respublica* is Latin. ‘Res’ means ‘thing’ and ‘publica’ means ‘of the people.’ So, republic literally means ‘a thing of the people,’ or more precisely, ‘a government by the people,’ or more aptly, ‘we the people!’”

“Whoa, that is awesome! So, what does ‘democracy’ mean?”

“The word *democracy* is Greek. It consists of two words. The first is ‘demos,’ which, like the Latin ‘publica,’ means ‘people’ or ‘public.’ You have heard of ‘demographics?’ That word uses the root ‘demos,’ too. Demographics is the measurement and analysis of groups of public/people.”

“Oh, cool!” one inmate said.

“The second part is ‘kratos’ which means ‘to rule.’ If you put ‘demos’ and ‘kratos’ together, you have ‘demoskratos,’ which means ‘rule by the people’ versus, in contrast to, for example, being ruled by a king.”

“Dude, that is incredible! Why haven’t we heard any of this information before now?”

“Understanding the meaning of those words really IS neat!” I continued, “So, the Latin word *respublica* and the Greek word *demoskratos* have very similar meanings. ‘Rule by the people’ or ‘we the people.’”

“But I still don’t understand the difference if the

meanings are essentially the same. So, if the United States is a republic, then what is a democracy? Is there any difference? I'm confused."

"Please forgive me. I did not fully answer your earlier question about a democracy. A true democracy involves citizen input on every decision. In other words, a pure democracy would require every citizen to vote on every public policy proposal. Can you imagine having to vote every day on multiple issues? It is just not practical for citizens who have their lives to live. So, we hire a congress to represent us, hence the republic."

One inmate spoke up and said, "What is the difference between a Democrat and a Republican?"

"I am glad you asked."

(I should note that just because most of these guys were not formally educated, they were still very intelligent and curious. It made for a very interesting conversation.)

Continuing, I said, "Neither political party is perfect. Both have a tendency to become caught up in pursuing their 'personal hobby-horses' which are not in society's best interest. Believe it or not, both parties actually agree

on many of the most important things. But the central ideological differences between the two are these:

“**DEMOCRATS** think you cannot take care of yourself and that government is needed to play a ‘surrogate parent’ to you. In other words, you cannot find a job, you cannot feed your family, you are unable to maintain a permanent spousal relationship, and your children are going to become addicts. It is how Democrats think and believe. That belief system is called ‘liberalism’ because Democrats believe that traditional beliefs and principles are too restrictive and ‘liberal’ beliefs and behaviors are okay for the individual, even though such behaviors are destructive to society. If liberal behaviors by individuals destroy traditional societal norms, the Democrats will hopefully be there to take over.

“**REPUBLICANS** on the other hand think you, and only you, should take care of yourself/your nuclear family, and that government’s role is to make sure no one interferes with your ability to do so. If you find yourself in trouble, it is your nuclear family which should be first to step up to assist. That belief system is called ‘conservatism’ because Republicans hope to preserve/ conserve those principles which enable a family to pursue happiness, as stated in the Declaration of Independence,

because those principles are best for both the individual and society.”

I continued, “Of course, both parties have both good and bad qualities which extend beyond the central beliefs that I just explained. Neither is completely good nor completely bad. But political parties can end up politically irrelevant, and the Democrats are on the verge of it now. If the Republicans do not strictly adhere to correct principles, they, too, could end up politically irrelevant in the future.”

One inmate asked, “What is a nuclear family? Like Kim Jong-un and his offspring?” (Laughter.)

“Very clever! But no, it is not what it means. The nuclear family is a father, mother, and children.”

“I never knew my father,” said one inmate.

“Neither did I,” commented another.

“I am very sorry to hear it. The breakdown of the family is what gives the Democrats their relevance and justification for taking the paternal role which I just described. It is that ideology which is making things far

worse in America.”

“Yeah, but I couldn’t provide for my girlfriend and my two children. I just couldn’t do it on my own, and so I sold drugs to pay the bills, and that is how I ended up here.”

Many in the group nodded their heads as if to say their situation was very similar, too.

It was not the first time I had heard that recurring story. They could, if they wanted, break that cycle if someone taught them how.

“Do you want to break that cycle?” I asked.

They all nodded.

“You all want the government to leave you alone, right? You want to find productive work and to be able to provide for your children, right? You want to prove that you are not pathetic and inept like the Democrats believe you are, right? You are not pathetic, right?”

“Right!” All concurred.

“The key is to adhere to those principles that create a strong, permanent nuclear family. I have been married for 26 years. My parents have been married for over 50 years. I think I speak with some moral authority on this subject. A couple’s relationship starts off on the right foot by marrying BEFORE they have children (**FIRST PRINCIPLE**).

“They then bring **The Higher Power** into their relationship so that their relationship is blessed, strengthened, and guided. They pray together. ‘In God They Trust’ (**SECOND PRINCIPLE**). When they bring God into their marriage, new unexpected opportunities begin to appear. ‘Luck,’ as so many call it, starts to pop up here and there. In reality, that ‘luck’ is answered prayers, blessings from Heaven. Other people, such as potential employers/clients, see confidence, radiant light, wholesomeness, and a solid work ethic beaming from the couple. The couple obeys the two fundamental rules of living in a free society: (1) They do all they agree to do, and (2) They never encroach on other peoples’ property or person (**THIRD PRINCIPLE**).

“Accordingly, people want to be around the couple. People feel they can trust them, and people bring the couple into their circles of trust.

“The couple’s blessings begin to multiply, and they begin to prosper and to gain stature in their community. The husband and wife, together, teach their children those same principles (**FOURTH PRINCIPLE: TEACH THE PRINCIPLES TO YOUR CHILDREN**).

“When what I have explained is understood and lived, there is little need for a government because the family IS the government in their lives. It is what Democrats fear the most . . . self-governance.”

One inmate said, “That is exactly the life I want. But I could never pray with my girlfriend. It would be too weird. It would be too uncomfortable.”

“Praying together can feel really weird and uncomfortable at first, but it is no different from a myriad of other proper things to do. For example, some feel uncomfortable going to college, but they should go anyway. Others find it difficult to refrain from foul language, or alcohol and drugs, but they should refrain anyway. Others have a difficult time developing a solid work ethic, maintaining a clean home, clean clothes, and more. But a couple should do those things if they want the government to stay out of their lives. Remember, self-governance.”

“Are you saying that the Democrats want us to fail so that they can become our so-called surrogate ‘parent?’”

“Well, they will never admit that they want you to fail. If Americans reject the notion that government is more important than family, as the Democrats believe, then the Democrats will become irrelevant. So, in essence, yes. The Democrats NEED you to fail so that you will NEED them. Give some deep thought to what you believe politically. What is right for you and your family?”

A few days after this political conversation, Annette informed me that our senators were successful in their efforts to have me re-designated to FCI Englewood, Colorado.

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HOW AMERICAN LAWS ARE MADE

December 17, 2017



A December 2017 message written by Matthew D. Hutcheson to family and friends while at FCI Englewood, Colorado about how Congress makes laws. Very few inmates knew the process when Matthew shared it with them. These things are what every American should understand about how government works.

DEAR FAM,

There is something I want to share with you about the legislative process.

Right now, the United States Congress (Congress = the House of Representatives and the Senate. Together, they comprise “the Congress.”) is preparing to finalize a tax bill to bring to the president for his signature.

Because I am being asked so many questions every day about how the process works, I thought that I would explain it all in another update.

The term *camera* means “chamber.” Old cameras had a chamber in which the film or plate was kept. The film/plate is what captured the image which came through the lens. The chamber “captures” the information to be saved/stored/remembered.

In law, the term *in camera* means “in the judge’s chambers.” It means something filed with the court “in camera” will be viewed by the judge while he is in his chambers, and it is not shared with the public nor is it accessible on the docket. In modern terminology, it means a document is “sealed.”

In legislation, there are two “chambers” of Congress—the House of Representatives and the Senate. Therefore, there are two “cameras” in which legislation is developed and viewed. The two-chamber-legislation form of government is called bicameralism. “Bi” means two. “Camera” means chamber. So, we have a two-chamber system of lawmaking. What happens during the bicameral process is very interesting, and I have participated in it firsthand.

A member of one chamber “drops” a bill. Decades ago, a paper copy was literally dropped in an old oak box in the Capitol building.

The clerk of either the House or the Senate would unlock the box, take all the bills out, and register them in the legislative log. That practice of “dropping a bill” still happens today, but it is more ceremonial to keep the tradition alive. Bills today are sent to the clerk electronically.

The bill is assigned to a congressional committee in which it is debated, edited, improved, etc. Then, the committee votes. If it passes committee, the bill is presented to the leadership of the chamber.

Today, in the House, the leader is Paul Ryan from Wisconsin. Today, in the Senate, the leader is Mitch McConnell from Kentucky—both Republicans.

The leader of the chamber will decide whether to take the bill to the entire chamber for a vote. If it happens, and the chamber adopts the bill, it is taken to the other chamber for its approval. Sometimes the other chamber will simply adopt the bill of its counterpart in “as-is” form. Then it goes to the president for signature.

However, in many instances, such as what is happening now with the tax bill, each chamber adopted (voted for) its own version. When it occurs that way, the differences between the two bills must be reconciled. Reconciliation happens in something called “conference.” When a bill goes to conference, all of the provisions of both bills are “laid out on the table.”

Those provisions upon which both chambers agree are set aside as “given” or “presumed adopted.” The remaining provisions are those which contain disparities (differences) which must be discussed and decisions made. It is “bicameralism” which comes into play.

When the United States of America came to be, bicameralism was a unique form of lawmaking. It ensures that laws are created for the people, by the people. When a voter calls his or her member of Congress, the voter may request a certain provision be considered in the bill.

Those requests will at least be considered, and if enough requests of a similar nature are made, the request will make it into the negotiation phase. Lawmakers then negotiate the differences and arrive at compromises. Sometimes it is easy. Sometimes it becomes quite heated and there are very real arguments. But eventually, a

compromise is reached, and a new bill is constructed which consists of all the original “given” provisions and all the new compromises.

Then, the new “joint bill” is taken back to each respective chamber for another vote. If both chambers adopt the joint bill, it is sent to the president for his consideration. If he signs it, the bill becomes the law of the land, which is how the process works.

Life in the Extreme,

Matt

NEVER, EVER TAKE A KNEE

July 4, 2018



A July 4, 2018 Independence Day message written by Matthew D. Hutcheson to family and friends while at FCI Englewood, Colorado. The message conveys the great lengths American soldiers took to protect the American flag during the War of 1812. If you love America, never, ever “take a knee.”

DEAR FAM,

I never thought I would be celebrating yet another national day of freedom without my own. But I love the United States of America and I always have. So many sacrifices have gone into making America what she is, and I want to share some heartfelt thoughts with you.

The American Revolution technically began on July 2, 1775 when George Washington took command of the

Continental Army. General Washington was not a friend of tyranny, and King George knew that if there were any man on earth who could threaten his seat of power, it was General Washington.

The following month, on August 23, 1775, King George declared the Colonies “traitors.”

The colonists declared independence from Great Britain the following year on July 4, 1776. The war raged on between the colonists and Great Britain until General Cornwallis surrendered late in 1781.

France and Great Britain each recognized America’s independence at the Treaty of Paris, September 3, 1783. Even after the Treaty of Paris, things were still touch-and-go between the United States and Great Britain. Anger and resentment still smoldered between the nations for three more decades, and eventually, war ignited again in 1812.

In the years leading up to 1812, Great Britain had captured and imprisoned over 4,000 U.S. sailors. Great Britain also continued to arm American Indians with weapons, and those Indians raided the Western border of the United States, causing chaos and death.

British ships harassed American trade ships at sea. Accordingly, by 1810, the United States had had enough. It stopped all commerce with Great Britain—the lack of commerce was the final spark that ignited the war on June 18, 1812.

The War of 1812 became so ugly that by 1814 the British had burned down the U.S. Capitol and the White House. The Maryland militia rose up, with awe-inspiring bravery, and stopped the British from advancing further on land.

For a short time, the war seemed to abate, but only because Great Britain intended to finally crush the United States once and for all through a sea-to-land assault from Britain's war ships, which had been summoned and would be arriving to the place of attack within hours.

U.S. leadership asked an attorney from Baltimore, Maryland, to meet with the admiral of the British fleet to negotiate the release of U.S. prisoners of war being held in the belly of dozens of British war ships anchored in or near the harbor.

The young attorney boarded a rowboat and went out to meet the admiral on board the flagship.

Once on board, the admiral told this young attorney, whose name was Francis Scott Key, that they could negotiate, but by morning it would be pointless because most of the British fleet would arrive in hours to ultimately destroy Fort McHenry and seize control over the United States of America, once again bringing her under British rule. In other words, releasing the prisoners would happen anyway because the next day they would be British subjects.

The admiral kept Mr. Key on board the ship to witness the frightening, dreadful appearance of dozens more British warships joining the others in preparation for delivering the final blow over Fort McHenry and the Americans.

Mr. Key went down into the belly of the ship in which hundreds of prisoners sat chained to the hull. He described to them what it was—the final battle, and perhaps the end of the United States of America.

When darkness came, the cannons began, in sudden thunderous roar, to blanket Fort McHenry in death and destruction. For hours and hours night's blackness was lit with the fiery explosions of cannon-propelled bombs.

There was no abatement. It went on and on. Mr. Key could, with his own eyes aided by the light of each explosion, see that the American flag still flew over Fort McHenry.

Through the night, the prisoners frequently inquired above, "Mr. Key, does our Star-Spangled Banner still wave?" He yelled down into the dark prison below, "It is still there!" The prisoners erupted with the hope-inspired cheers of patriots!

The unrelenting and violent barrage lasted all night. Fort McHenry and the immediate area in which the flag flew took direct hit after direct hit. Hundreds of brave Americans died to ensure that magnificent symbol of liberty never faltered or fell by propping it up by any means of support, knowing that by doing so, they would likely die.

They knew that if the flag fell once to the ground, the Brits would claim victorious dominion over America.

THE AMERICAN FLAG MUST NOT FALL!

The patriots would give all to preserve liberty, as symbolized by the American flag.

There was no taking a knee in that gloriously heroic moment. There were only great demonstrations of courage that honored past sacrifices of their forefathers and protected America's promises for their future posterity.

Then, morning came and the cannons stopped. Once again, the prisoners shackled below inquired of Mr. Key:

*Please tell us, Mr. Key
Now that the day is dawning, what do you see?
What of America's symbol of liberty?
It was there yesterday morning.
Does it still fly in majesty
After the entire night's bomb storming?*

*Did our symbol of hope;
Its broad stripes and bright stars
Endure and repel the encroach
Upon life, liberty and happiness' meaning?*

*Yes, boys! Yes! It survived the reproach!
Oh, how I wish you could see . . . it is gallantly streaming!
Take us home from this wretched blight!
The prisoners proclaimed to Mr. Key*

*To honor those who bravely died last night
To forever live in the land of the free.*

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God bless the United States of America! God bless our beloved Stars and Stripes! God bless the loyal brave who call America home!

(Always remember, even now, that I am freer and have more rights than most of the pre-Revolution colonists! Think about that the next time you see someone take a knee!)

Life in the Extreme,

Matt

PART II

Capitalism vs. Socialism

The following pages you are about to read were written by a federal prisoner, Matthew D. Hutcheson, under the extreme conditions of solitary confinement sometime between November 16, 2015 and March 24, 2016. It was written by pen and paper, without source materials, and transcribed by his mother. It memorializes a five-week prison-sponsored class at FCI Terminal Island, California. The class was intended to be about entrepreneurialism but instead evolved into a political discussion on freedom, socialism, capitalism and more. Prepare to be inspired and informed.

Respectfully submitted,

Jerry L. Melchisedeck, Sr., Lt Col USAF (Ret)

Jay Inman, Lt Col US Army (Ret)

Robert Gilbeau, Fmr. Rear Admiral US Navy (Ret)

Lee Ofner, DDS

INTRODUCTION



The following is an excerpt taken from handwritten letters sent to Carol Hutcherson, Matthew's mother, while he was in solitary confinement at FCI Terminal Island, California. The letters were written between November 2015 and March 2016. The letters are memorialized discussions between Matthew and inmates participating in a prison-sponsored class. This excerpt has been abridged and edited.

MANY INCIDENTS OF VIOLENCE occur because of desperation. Such desperation is caused not only by economic disparities but also because individuals have not been taught correct principles. Economic disparities are caused by a lack of trust in societal ideas and by refusal to apply those ideas which successful people accept as given. Do not just give a guy a principle; teach him how to live it and he will be free for a lifetime.

I came to these observations after I was asked by the psychology department at the prison to teach an entrepreneurial class to the students of Residential Drug Addiction Program or RDAP. Every race was represented in the class.

This class provided a safe environment for inmates to ask questions, and fascinating discussions were had. A discussion about entrepreneurialism cannot be had without an understanding of free trade and markets. The notion that a person can create capital from the production or invention of goods and services, which can be reinvested to produce more capital, is the single greatest human invention. Albert Einstein has called the greatest human invention “compound interest.” That statement is a fun saying to repeat, but Einstein was incorrect. The greatest discovery is capitalism—the source of compound interest. Capitalism is not created. It is naturally occurring, and therefore can only be discovered.

During the first class, I saw firsthand how intelligent these men were and how they starved for knowledge and understanding. The following are recaps of the classes which I taught to the best of my memory. I love teaching with the question and answer method.

Week 1

ENTREPRENEURIAL CLASS

“Capitalism”



“WHERE DID CAPITALISM COME from?” one inmate asked.

“It was discovered, not created,” I said. “Ideas or objects that are discovered are part of nature or are part of the natural occurrence of things.”

“How was it discovered?”

“There are many different examples,” I explained. “The discovery was so normal to the observer that he probably did not even recognize it as a discovery. Take livestock for example. Let us say you own a cow which eventually bears a calf. Once you had one asset (the cow). Now you have two. Your original asset (capital) has doubled itself.”

“But it didn’t just happen. There was effort involved, wasn’t there?” asked a classmate.

“Of course, effort and work are always part of the success equation.”

The classmate was understanding it. One said, “If the rancher bred the cow and also the calf, he would then have four animals.”

“Right, and do not forget the value goes beyond breeding. Milk can be sold for income.”

“So,” said the inmate, “Someone can own a valuable asset and also earn income from it without diminishing the value of the asset.”

“Right.”

Another inmate chimed in. “It’s just like a rental house.”

“Precisely,” I said. “Thousands of years ago, humans discovered they could obtain revenue or income from their property. Sheep produce sheerings of wool to sell. Buildings could be used as inns. Horses and camels could

be rented out for transportation, oxen for field work.”

“You’re saying that wealth is tied to income producing capital?”

“Correct.”

“And that is what a capitalist is?”

“Right. A capitalist is someone who lives on the income produced from assets he owns.”

“What’s so bad about that? That’s exactly what we all want,” exclaimed a class member.

“It’s not bad. It’s good,” recognized another.

“Then why have we always been told that capitalists are evil?” asked still another.

“Who told you that?”

“I dunno. No particular person. Maybe politicians. It’s just a belief we all have.”

All heads were nodding, and classmates made

comments to each other. I asked for clarification. “Yet, you guys want to be entrepreneurs, which is good. Entrepreneurs are the life blood of capitalism.”

“Then capitalism is not evil,” one inmate said with new understanding.

“Perhaps you are wondering where the false idea that ‘capitalism is evil’ crept into the narrative of society?” They nodded. “Capitalism is a way for an individual to realize his or her full potential. It is true that multiple individuals may partner up in an endeavor, but the main objective is a favorable outcome for each individual.”

“That’s where work and effort come in?”

“In part, yes. A successful capitalist has three core things going for him or her. First is a knowledge of the income producing asset, including an understanding of and relationship with buyers for the good or services offered. It requires study, the ability to build and maintain relationships of trust with customers or clients.”

“So, a capitalist should be a trusted member of society.”

“Yes, ideally. At a minimum, trust needs to exist between buyers and sellers. The second thing is a knowledge and understanding of risk and how to manage it.”

“Like what to do if all your sheep get sick and die!” one said.

“Right,” I said, “And how to prevent it.”

“Cool! And the third?” they asked.

“The third is the ability to persevere in the face of great obstacles, adversity, or loss. Being a capitalist takes great courage. Without courageous capitalists, there would be no cars, no cell phones, no airplanes, no electronics, no grocery stores, no modern medicine, no new knowledge, or new methods. The list goes on and on. Without free trade and capitalism, we would be walking everywhere we went, growing our own food, and making our own clothes.”

“Without capitalism, the prison system would not be bursting at the seams with human warehousing.” All laughed, but it was a sad laugh.

“Unfortunately, it is true. It is one reason some

dislike or distrust capitalism. When someone's capital consists of human beings behind bars, profit derived from human suffering can be viewed as evil. But guys, we should not let what the government has done to us infect our belief system about capitalism.”

One inmate spoke up, “Like anything, evil can creep into the good.”

“Thank you for bringing us back on point,” I said. “The purity of capitalism can be corrupted by individuals or by governments who have too much influence over free trade. Kings can lay claim to an individual's capital, illegally encroaching on a person's ownership rights. Governments can over-tax or over-regulate. In my personal case, a governmental agency encroached on a private endeavor by which it felt threatened, and thus tried to destroy the endeavor by incarcerating me. Other individuals can corrupt pure capitalism by introducing force or fraud into a transaction.”

“Like the Mafia?” one inmate posed.

“Exactly,” I said. “When fraud, force, deception, or encroachment interferes with free trade, capitalism begins to fail.”

One astute inmate asked, “Did I understand you correctly that capitalism is at risk by unchecked power, whether by a king, government, by force or fraud, or by anyone?”

“Yes, you understood correctly. When capitalism fails, things can become quite scary. It leaves the populace open to encroaching forms of government in which freedom can be lost.”

“What kinds of government?” someone asked.

“Governments such as monarchies, socialism, totalitarianism, and communism.”

“Like Hitler?”

“Yes, and many others that came before him.”

“Could a government like Hitler ever happen again?”

“It could.”

“How can we prevent it?”

“That question reveals the growing seed of knowledge and wisdom developing inside each of you,” I told the class. “Remember, capitalism is not government. Rather, capitalism is simply the naturally occurring multiplication of assets and generation of income within a free society. Once that freedom to grow and expand is destroyed by other influences, whatever they may be, a form of government will emerge which will seek to control or oppress the naturally occurring. The idea of something being ‘naturally occurring’ was referred to by the Founding Fathers as ‘self-evident.’”

“I can see how our government interferes with capitalism,” one said in a discouraging tone. The class was silent, thinking.

I ended the class by saying, “Next week I will share a history lesson about our nation, about capitalism, and how each of us can be part of the solution to preserve freedom and liberty for our children and grandchildren.”

One student teased, “Hey man, talking about freedom and liberty is a sore point with us.”

The group broke out in laughter. I could not hold

back a hearty laugh either.

“See you next week.”

Week 2

ENTREPRENEURIAL CLASS

“History”



“GOOD TO SEE YOU guys again. Do you have any questions from last week’s class?”

Eager to continue, the class asked me to start where I left off. These men looked at me with a focus that created a near-palpable feeling in the room. They waited as if I were about to unfold the greatest mystery of life to them for the first time. The environment was electric in anticipation of what I had to say that day. I began.

“Remember, last time I said government’s purpose is to protect the naturally occurring from encroachment by others, including itself.”

“What did you say ‘naturally occurring’ meant again?” one student asked.

“It means self-evident rights given to us by a power greater than man’s power and an authority greater than man’s authority. Here is an example. Each of you has talents. When you develop your talents and abilities, you are happy. You have the right to pursue happiness. The government is supposed to protect your right to pursue the development of your talents, interests, entrepreneurial ventures, acquisition of assets and income, and so on. As long as you do not encroach on others in your pursuit of happiness, the government’s primary purpose is to ensure that the interests of others, or even the government itself, does not encroach on you. The government is also there to protect our lives from those who would do us harm, whether in or out of the United States. It is also there to preserve our liberty from those who would take it from us.”

Another inmate said, “Where did the phrase ‘life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness’ come from?”

An inmate from the back row piped up and said, “The Declaration of Independence, you dummy.”

“Please, do not call him ‘dummy.’”

“Sorry.”

“It is a better question than you might think—a really, very good question. Actually, most people do not understand how that phrase appeared in the Declaration of Independence. I would like to take you on a little historical journey.”

The entire class sat up and leaned forward in anticipation. I began by explaining conditions thousands of years ago.

“Families were organized into societal bodies which we call tribes today. Families obeyed tribal rules. Disputes were settled within the tribes. Different tribes might fight with each other from time to time, but by and large, peace and capitalism prevailed. Over time, tribes began to appoint kings, believing that a king would make their lives better. The opposite happened. More wars were fought, and freedoms lost.

“Eventually, even ancient Israel demanded a human king over their Heavenly King. Centuries of suffering, bloodshed, and loss of liberty was the result.

“When the Founding Fathers declared ‘all men are created equal,’ they intentionally took a swipe at the legitimacy of the king of Great Britain. They essentially stated

that he was no longer king over them, and that they now were going to form a government which ensured the individual's 'life, liberty, and pursuit of happiness.' Do you value your lives?"

"What kind of question is that?" one asked.

I responded, "I take it as a yes?!"

"Yes."

"Do you value liberty?"

"More than you know," retorted a student.

Everybody laughed.

"Do not forget," I said, "I am in here just like you, and I do know how much you value liberty."

"Oh yeah, sometimes we forget you are a prisoner."

"Do you value happiness?"

"Of course," they said.

“If our government drifts from its purpose of ensuring the rights of life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness, then we can be sure that a new form of government will soon be found on the doorstep knocking. Never, ever take the miracle of America for granted.”

I explained that liberty and capitalism are naturally occurring, absent the “pride of kings” as Thomas Paine put it. Since happiness means different things to different people, each person’s unique flavor of happiness must be chosen by the individual. I explained that this important phrase in the Declaration is the result of centuries of thinking and debating of great human minds. The debate found moments of success, one particularly worth mentioning. It was when King John of England signed the Magna Carta on June 15, 1215.

“What’s the Magna Carta?” one asked.

“The Magna Carta was a governing document that placed checks and balances on the king. Essentially, the new document declared ‘the king is not king—the law is king.’ *Magna Carta* is Latin for ‘great charter’ or ‘grand governing law.’ The Magna Carta created the first concept of co-equal branches of government, similar to our executive branch, the president; legislative

branch, Congress; and the judicial branch, the courts. However, as good a step forward as the Magna Carta was, three problems lingered on with England's form of government.

“First, England kept the monarchial form of government—that is, kings and queens who sometimes ruled in monarchial tyranny.

“Second, England had a class system which was also a form of tyranny, often referred to as ‘aristocratical tyranny’ which oppressed those with less money and clout.

“Third, was the common people who tried, often futilely, to insist the first two behave with moral virtue.”

A hand was raised. “I have a question,” said one member of the class. “I’m having trouble following all of this. Why are you telling us all this England stuff? It doesn’t have anything to do with us today.”

“I am thankful for your question. This history lesson is critically important information for you to understand. It sets the stage for some of the greatest events in human history. Please, bear with me a little longer.”

“Okay, . . . I’m just sayin’.”

“I understand. Hang with me, okay?”

“Okay.”

“The colonists had reached some conclusions. First, if the king had to be checked by the common people, why have a king at all? Second, the king had very little information about the daily lives of the common people, yet the king was required to act in cases affecting people when the highest judgment was required. He often made very bad decisions.

“This situation presented a contradiction. The life of a king necessarily shuts him away from his or her subjects for self-protection, yet the business of a king required him to know the situation involving his subjects and to make decisions accordingly. Sometimes, the decisions made by the king were really encroachments. This contradiction, as pointed out by Thomas Paine, showed the colonists that being governed by a man across the ocean was ridiculous. Being subject to a local government ‘for the people and by the people’ was the only logical approach.”

“So, are you saying the colonists saw the king as

someone who thought he was better than everybody else, but didn't know anything about them?"

"Correct. This kingly neglect evolved into oppression. The oppression evolved into violence. Casting off the king's claim on the colonies would require severing ties with England, which caused more violence."

"So, those guys just got together and wrote the Declaration of Independence one day?"

"Not even close. Let us finish this discussion next week."

After class that day I started thinking about a book I had read called *The Way of Kings* by Brandon Sanderson. Sanderson said:

"Often I wonder if my experiences in life—my easy life and my current level of comfort—have given me any true experience to use in making laws. If we had to rely on what we knew, kings would only be of use in creating laws regarding proper heating of tea and cushioning of thrones."

Such were the colonists' experiences. Do our

government leaders today really understand the people they represent?

Week 3

ENTREPRENEURIAL CLASS

“Francis Hutcheson, Adam Smith, Thomas Paine, John Locke and Thomas Jefferson”



“WELCOME BACK, GUYS,” I began. “To begin, I want to briefly review what we discussed during the prior two classes.”

A Polynesian student interrupted, “Hutch, before you start, could I ask you a question? In our first class we discussed natural occurrences . . . things that are self-evident. Is capitalism one of the natural occurrences?”

“Exactly, go on.”

“It dawned on me what you were saying. Like, if this class were stranded on an island, capitalism would emerge naturally, automatically, right?”

I nodded and he continued. “I thought one of us might start harvesting coconuts. Another person might gather thatch for shelter. Another might catch fish. Another might dig roots. Someone might weave hammocks. Then, at some point, we would start trading or bartering with each other to get things we need that the other person has. And whatever product has the greatest demand will get the greatest exchange.”

“Bingo!” I exclaimed. “Beautifully stated.”

“Awe, thanks. This picture in my mind helped me understand why capitalism and free trade are self-evident. If some government suddenly started to interfere with our growing, fragile economy, the entire process would fall apart. We could starve or die from exposure. I finally get it, I mean, why protecting capitalism is so crucial to society’s well-being.”

“I could not have stated it better myself. Your brilliant summary is basically what I wanted to cover for week 1. Now, let me ask you a question. What if one of you on the island had nothing to offer because you lacked skills, knowledge, initiative, or all three? Say that one went from person to person asking each of you to give something to him of what you have worked so hard

to accumulate through effort or trade. How would you deal with that person?”

“We’d kick him off the island.” All laughed and nodded.

“Seriously,” I said. “Let us say he was starving. What would you really do? Take a moment and think seriously about it.”

After a period of pondering and contemplation, a hand raised.

“Go ahead.”

“We’d have to form a committee or appoint a decision maker to decide how to deal with him.”

“You have just formed a government,” I said.

“Oh great.” There was a round of laughter.

“At a minimum, you have elected a judge. Now, let us say the judge says each of you will take a portion of your property to give to support the one without anything to offer.”

“That sounds like a tax on us. We hope it would be fair,” said one inmate.

Another inmate said, “Wouldn’t it be better to teach him a trade or skills so he can be part of us without taking our stuff?”

“Excellent analysis. You are absolutely correct. As your society grows, you may find some who just cannot provide for themselves. In such cases, would you prefer to help support that individual of your own free will and choice, or do you want the judge to mandate how much you have to give?”

“On our own, for sure!”

“But what if your elected judge demands that you pay a tax. Then he creates a bunch of little technical rules making it increasingly difficult to provide for yourself, let alone for those who truly cannot take care of themselves? What then?”

“We would have to make big changes to our government. But wait! Can we do that?”

“You created the government to solve a problem. It

was created by you to help you.”

“So, we can change the government?”

“Of course. You may have to define its parameters and authorities more narrowly. You have the power to control the government you created. It should never control you. Government is meant to prevent problems, not to be the problems.

“Remember, last week I explained how government can and often does encroach on our rights instead of protecting them? This is particularly true with a king. I also explained how the colonists had arrived at the conclusion that the king of England was not what they wanted nor that to which they were entitled. But this conclusion did not happen overnight. The seeds were planted in the 1215 Magna Carta. Those seeds continued to grow very slowly into the late 1600s. Remember, last week I told you the idea of ‘life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness’ was the result of centuries of thinking and debating of great human minds? In the late 1600s and early 1700s there was a burst of human enlightenment with respect to the rights that God gives us—rights that did not come from a king or government. Making such a discovery was dangerous back then.”

“It still is!” one class member exclaimed. The class chuckled and nodded.

I continued, “Many of the ideas found their origins in Scotland and France. These ideas began to spread throughout Europe like an underground movement. The man who some call the ‘Father of the Scottish Enlightenment’ was named Francis Hutcheson.”

“Wait,” someone said. “Your last name is Hutcheson! Is it the same spelling?”

“It is.”

“Are you related to Francis?”

“I do not know. It would be an interesting connection if I were. In 1737, a fourteen-year-old boy began to study under Hutcheson, who was at that time the chair of Moral Philosophy at the University of Glasgow, Scotland. Hutcheson taught his young student enlightened concepts about morality, virtue, ethics, economics, and the true role of government.”

“Who was his student?” asked someone from the back.

“His name was Adam Smith. Do any of you recognize the name?”

Heads shook in the negative.

“Adam Smith was Hutcheson’s protégé. Smith would eventually succeed Hutcheson as Chair of Moral Philosophy at the university. At some point, long after Hutcheson had passed away, Smith began correspondence with a man named Thomas Paine. Smith rehearsed with Paine everything he had learned from Hutcheson, including two important beliefs Hutcheson is said to have strongly embraced before his death. The first belief was that the American colonies should be independent from England so the colonists can enjoy their right to ‘life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.’”

The class looked shocked. “Are you saying that Thomas Jefferson didn’t create that phrase?”

“It is what I am saying. Hutcheson schooled Adam Smith, who influenced Thomas Paine, *who* influenced Thomas Jefferson. You see, it took many years and many great minds to distill out such a beautiful truth which ended up in the Declaration of Independence. Hutcheson was influenced by John Locke, Cicero and

others. So many great thinkers of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries influenced the ideas expressed in the Declaration of Independence.”

“Why haven’t we heard of this before?”

“You would have learned about Adam Smith in college economics and about Thomas Paine in American history. We are just putting the dots together. In 1776, a big year in America, three documents were produced that affected the creation of America. Thomas Paine published an important pamphlet called *Common Sense*. In today’s world it would be more like a political policy paper. That same year, Adam Smith published *The Wealth of Nations*. That book would become the most important book in modern economics. The reading of these two documents gave the Founding Fathers a great deal of comfort and intellectual support for independence. On July 4, 1776, a great moment in history, the Declaration of Independence was signed.”

The class buzzed with excitement. “Wow! That’s amazing!”

An astute inmate added, “I heard the Founding Fathers had once used or preferred ‘life, liberty, and

property.”

“True,” I said. “You see the phrase was used in that time in different ways depending on context and background. For example, on September 5, 1774, the colonies entered into the Articles of Association where the phrase ‘life, liberty, and property’ was used. The Articles were basically a contract among the colonies to join together to address grievances and intolerable acts of oppression by the king of England. The Articles provided the glue that held the colonies together during the fight for independence. It also sent notice to the king that the colonies would be okay discontinuing export of goods to England. It would also stop importing goods from England.”

“I bet that got the attention of the king,” said one.

“Oh yeah,” said another.

“You know,” said another, “The Articles of Association would be like if all inmates everywhere stopped working for prisons and jails for ten cents per hour. The prison would have to bring in lunch ladies, laundry workers, janitors, and repair crews from the outside. It would turn the economics of the prison upside down.”

“Interesting example. But understand I am not suggesting or advocating that you stop working. But I see you do understand the idea about the Articles of Association. It made the king realize he was vulnerable, and rightly so. These documents influenced the founding of the United States, a place in which capitalism could flourish. You see, capitalism sprouts automatically, almost immediately, where liberty exists. The more liberty, the more effectively capitalism works, generally. The colonists were tired of being oppressed. Such oppression was devastating to their entrepreneurial pursuits.”

“Generally?”

“Interesting that you caught that. Even Adam Smith realized that if moral virtue is absent in both buyer and seller, the risk of force or fraud exists. Smith called this truth ‘the law of the jungle.’”

“So, what do we do if we have ‘the law of the jungle?’” asked another.

“Well, now we are back to balancing the intrusions of government to protect individuals who have been abused by those who refuse to follow two universal laws, which I will discuss next week.”

“Guys,” someone interrupted. “We just need to deal fairly and honestly and teach others to do the same. If everybody would do that, the need for government intervention would go away.”

I smiled. “You understand. My work here today is finished. See you next week.”

Week 4

ENTREPRENEURIAL CLASS

“Principles of Behavior”



THE NEXT WEEK I asked my class, “Well, any new thoughts that you may have had during the week?”

“Yeah,” one volunteered. “I’ve been thinking that if I had understood that I was putting a strain on the country, I probably wouldn’t have done what I did.”

“I am very happy to hear that. Now that you understand the principles, commit to follow them, and teach others to do the same. When we break the law, we cause our government to make more laws and make government bigger and nastier. It is like sticking it to ourselves. Any other thoughts?”

“We’ve been talking in the yard. Are capitalism and socialism opposites and at odds with each other?”

I replied, “Well, it seems to be true, but not for the reasons that you might think. Capitalism is organic. It happens naturally within a free community or society. Socialism is like a genetically modified organism (GMO).”

The class laughed. “Socialism is an artificial mix of government and a suppressed or limited form of capitalism. The academic definition of socialism is ‘state-owned means of production, administration, and distribution.’ In socialism, the nation or state owns the capital. What do you think the outcome is when socialism is employed?”

“It makes me think the economy is like a caged bird with clipped wings. If its wings are clipped, it can’t fly.”

Another added, “If capitalism is limited by government, people will not be able to get goods and services as easily.”

“And the government will control our businesses through rules and taxes. It will take from us money to pay for things we might not agree with.”

“Good thinking, class—excellent observations. Those who argue for socialism say that society has

digressed to a point at which buyers and sellers can no longer trust each other to do business, which requires the government to step in.”

A hand raised quickly. “Oh, I just had a thought. If capitalism is a natural occurrence, it must mean how God intends us to interact with each other.”

Someone countered, “But what if people don’t interact well with each other?”

“Well,” I said, “It is at that point that capitalism breaks down. Capitalism is not the problem. People are the problem.”

One guy added, “It’s like the debate on guns. Guns are not the problem. People behaving badly are the problem. That is why government keeps trying to control guns—then it can control the people.”

“Being a citizen of the United States carries with it great expectations and implicit agreements with each other. The Constitution, with its other founding documents and principles, presupposes that we will interact with each other properly and fairly. In other words, we must know correct principles and control ourselves.”

Another student had a question. “I want to know how we choose a good government. And I want to know how politics could affect my chances of having a successful business.”

“Well, let me explain. Politics is not always the same as regulation, but the two are always connected at some level to some degree.”

Out of curiosity, I asked those who were Democrats to raise their hands. A few raised their hands. Then I asked those who were Republican to raise theirs. Again, a few raised their hands. But the overwhelming majority did not know to which ideology they closely identified. This class was going to be a very interesting meeting. I wanted to gauge their visceral gut responses to a few political ideas.

I first asked, “When you are a business owner, how would you feel if a federal agent went to your bank account and withdrew \$2,000 each month and gave it to an employee of yours because the employee told the government that he needed it more than you . . . and there was nothing you could do about it?”

There was some discussion, but mostly outrage at

the thought. Then I said, “What if that \$2,000 is to pay for something that seems good, like medical bills or health insurance premiums?” More discussion. “What if the government told you with whom you had to do business?”

One inmate raised his hand and asked, “Whatever happened to ‘no shirt, no shoes, no service?’”

“My point exactly,” I said. “What if the government told you that beach bums in sand-laden shorts wanted to lounge in your five-star, coat and tie only restaurant? Would it be right for the government to take your decision to serve or not to serve away from you?”

The inmates were consternated over these possibilities.

“Whoa, I am simply the messenger. Do not shoot the messenger, okay?”

We all laughed, and things calmed down.

“Okay, now let us talk about a woman’s right to choose.” All students shifted in their chairs, expressing a little discomfort on the topic. “Where does our right to

choose come from? Does it come from the courts? Man's law? Man's authority?" There was a long, thoughtful pause. "Or," I continued, "Is there a higher authority than man's authority and a higher law than man's law?"

Someone asked, "Matt, are you saying that a higher power says it's okay for women to have abortions?"

"What do you think? Is that what I am trying to say?"

One hand rose and the inmate spoke up, "I think what you are saying is that a higher power—God—has given mankind the right to choose everything, including a right of a woman to have an abortion."

"Not exactly. It is much more complicated. I realize that it is a very touchy subject. I am not trying to persuade you in any direction. I only want you to begin to think differently so you can make up your own mind about your political leanings. This exercise is horizon-broadening, okay?"

"Okay," they mumbled, looking at each other.

"If the Supreme Court confirmed only what a higher

power had already conferred upon men and women, then why do we need any man-made laws at all?”

Seeing that question lost my audience, I clarified, “Have abortion rates gone up or down since *Roe v. Wade*?”

“What’s *Roe v. Wade*?” they asked.

“It was the Supreme Court’s decision that gives women the right to decide what is right for them, including having an abortion, and clarified that the government should keep its nose out of our business between a woman and her doctor,” I continued.

Someone made the comment, “It seems reasonable for the government to butt out. Since Republicans want the government to butt out, Republicans must really like that decision.”

“Not so fast,” I said, “There is more to it. You have heard of the Ten Commandments, right? The Ten Commandments are laws from God, and God said ‘Thou shalt not kill.’ So, man’s laws say it is legal, but God’s laws say a person has moral agency to choose but must face the consequences of his or her decision to disregard

God's law now or at a future time.

“Now, back to the question. Since women know they can legally have an abortion, what have many of them chosen to do with their right to choose? What has happened to the numbers of abortions?”

“They've gone up,” one inmate stated.

“Actually, they have gone down.”

“So, that's a good thing, right?”

“It means women are free to choose, and they are choosing NOT to abort more frequently.”

Another inmate responded, “Interesting. Then why all the arguing about it?”

“Aha, now we are driving to the heart of the matter. What do the different political parties believe about abortion?” More shifting. Some smiles. Much anticipation. “I recommend you ask a friend or family member to send you a book called *Whatever Happened to Justice?* by Richard Maybury.”

“Who is Richard Maybury anyway?”

“He was a political-economic philosopher. Maybury’s work will help you find your political identity faster than I can. However, I will share a few true principles with you from his book. Maybury says that there are two basic laws that all human beings innately know to be true, and thus, are given by a Higher Authority. The first is ‘do all you have agreed to do.’ That law includes implicit agreements with society such as do not sell illegal drugs or drive drunk. Society expects each of us to obey and honor this first law. The second law is ‘do not encroach on another’s person or another person’s property.’”

“What does encroach mean? You’ve used that term over and over, but I want to make sure I understand.”

“It means to trespass, or to ignore the boundaries or rights of others.”

“Understood.”

“If you violate law #1 by driving drunk and crash into another car injuring or killing the occupants, you have encroached on another person’s property. If you

injure the passenger, you have also encroached on that person. Am I making sense?”

“Yes.”

“So, let us apply the two laws to the three scenarios I mentioned earlier. Which rule was broken when the government took \$2,000 from you to give to your employee?”

“The second one . . . don’t encroach.”

Another hand sprang up and the inmate added, “Wait, isn’t there an implicit agreement on law #1 between you and your employee that you won’t take each other’s stuff?”

“Bingo, to both of you. Great job! But what about the second scenario in which a business has to accept anyone no matter how he is dressed or how dirty and smelly he is?”

Another man explained, “That beach bum had no right to ignore the rules of the establishment. He had an implicit agreement to honor the wishes of the restaurant owner. He also encroached by tracking sand all over and

making the other customers feel uncomfortable.”

“Excellent analysis. Now, how about the last example concerning *Roe v. Wade*? Think it through.”

After silent pondering and deep reflection, one man raised his hand hesitantly. “There isn’t a violation of an agreement unless the father wanted to keep the baby and the mother agreed, and then changed her mind without telling the father.”

“It is certainly true with respect to an agreement between the man and the woman.”

Another hand went up. “There’s no encroachment on the man because it is not his body.”

“Thank you for those comments. Anyone else?” I asked. No other hands went up. “This one is tricky,” I explained. “What if an abortion encroaches on the unborn child’s right to life as stated in the Declaration of Independence? What if an abortion encroaches on the property (the unborn) or the agenda (bringing human life into existence) of a Higher Authority?”

“We hadn’t thought of that. Encroaching on a

Higher Authority?” The inmates considered and discussed this idea for a time amongst themselves.

“Alright, guys, that is all for this week,” I said.

“But wait,” some said. “You never told us whether we lean Democrat or Republican.”

“You will have to discover it for yourselves based on these principles we have been discussing. Maybury has given us a framework to analyze our own actions and those of the political parties. But I will tell you, as Americans, we are closer in values and ideals than we think. If you think about it, all strife and contention in the world arises from the breaking of those simple laws. Now, for you personally, society expects you to obey these laws. As long as you adhere to these laws, you will stay out of prison. The more thoughtful you are in obeying these laws, the more society will reward you.

Remember, *give, not take, keep your word, and do not encroach!*”

Week 5

ENTREPRENEURIAL CLASS

“Documents of America’s Founding”



“OKAY, GUYS, LET US begin. We have had some good discussions thus far. We have learned that humans have a right to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness, unless they lose society’s trust through bad behavior. We learned that capitalism is the natural, organic occurrence when liberty exists. Liberty yields capitalism. It is no more complex than that fact. Amassing volumes of academic studies will not yield a different conclusion. As Malcolm Gladwell observed in his book *Blink*, ‘All that extra information isn’t actually an advantage at all; that, in fact, you need to know very little to find the underlying signature of a complex phenomenon.’ All other economic and governmental philosophies are man-made to restrict liberty and free trade. They operate by fear or lack of moral virtue. We have learned that we can preserve capitalism and freedom by doing all we agreed to do and by not encroaching on others.

“Now, I would like to summarize the primary documents that were part of America’s founding or greatly influenced it. These are documents that you should read at least once in your life. Better still is to study them.”

1. September 5, 1774, Articles of Association
2. Early 1776, *Common Sense* by Thomas Paine
3. 1776, *Wealth of Nations* by Adam Smith
4. July 4, 1776, The Declaration of Independence by Thomas Jefferson
5. November 15, 1777, Articles of Confederation, agreed to by Congress; ratified by new states (formerly individual colonies). The new nation called the United States of America.
6. September 17, 1787, The Constitution of the United States of America
7. December 15, 1791, The Bill of Rights, Amendments to the Constitution
8. 1795–2002, the other Amendments to the Constitution

“It may seem like a lot of information, perhaps initially a little overwhelming, but everyone in this class, and every U.S. citizen, should read these documents. Those citizens of the world who are interested in America or who want to live in America should also read them. Will

you read them?”

“We will,” promised members of the class.

In the following weeks I saw various members of the class reading from these documents in the prison library. It made me so happy to see.

The entrepreneurial class concluded after a reasonably thorough discussion about accounting, economics, finance, business law, marketing, and organizational behavior. The experience was a good one, both for class members and for me. I hope in the future these class members end up as productive citizens, living up to the principles they had learned. I hope the class will have played some role, large or small, in their future success.

As I left the classroom to return to my unit in the South yard, it was not lost upon me that eventually the members of that entrepreneurial class would want to know if I had violated the laws which we had just discussed, which resulted in my incarceration.

Sure enough, within days several class members joined me on one of the many picnic tables in the South yard. As is customary in prison, they came right to the point.

“Are you a real believer of the principles you taught us the other day?” one asked.

“Of course,” I said.

“But do you practice what you preach?”

“Do you think that I, a prisoner like you, should have some moral authority to teach those principles—that if I cannot live them, then I should not be encouraging you to live them?”

“Yeah, that’s exactly the point.”

“You make a good point, and I agree completely,” I said.

“Does that mean you will keep teaching or quit?”

“Do you care what the answer is?”

“Yes, we really do.”

“You want me to keep teaching the class?”

“We hope you will.”

“Look, guys, I was accused of making horrible mistakes which led to my incarceration. I did not do anything illegal. If I made any mistakes at all, it was due to my abnormal reaction to an abnormal situation. What happened to me is a complicated matter. I probably failed to communicate when I should have. I probably communicated too much when I should have been quiet. In the fog of war, many things went wrong at the same time. I was certainly overwhelmed and sometimes wondered what steps I should take next to correct what was going wrong. My honorable efforts to protect the investments were used against me, portraying my behavior as uncharacteristic. Many people who loved me and trusted me became confused. They had no idea what I was going through, and I could not tell them. They believed my behavior was indicative of wrongdoing.”

“They think you were doing them dirty?” one asked.

I chuckled with a lump in my throat. “Yes, something like that. There were political undercurrents which I was fighting which I did not think I could share with them.”

“You didn’t think they would believe you?”

“You are correct. I certainly would not be any worse off if I had just told them everything. But at the time it was simply too difficult to explain.”

“We understand, bro. So, you’re not a mobster?”

I laughed. “No, no. I am definitely not.”

“We know. Just kiddin’.”

“It is nearly impossible to change anchored beliefs. My friends, or former friends, or clients, or associates, will probably think I am a bad person to the day they die.”

“Won’t they forgive you? That makes them wrong, too.”

“Right now, they feel genuine betrayal. I did not purposely betray them, but what they feel is exactly the same as if I actually had betrayed them. It is a terribly painful emotion to experience. I do not hold it against them. I am hurting, too.”

“Is there any way to fix everything?”

“I am trying . . . perhaps in the appeal.”

“Hang in there, bro.”

We parted with the customary fist bump. Little did I know at that very moment, that I had already been betrayed by the attorney who had been appointed to handle my appeal. He did not intend to work on my appeal from the start.

A Final Word

TWO CONVERSATIONS



November 2019

Matthew D. Hutcheson has helped thousands of federal prisoners discover socio-political truth. The following contemporaneous memorialization of an actual conversation gives a fascinating look into prison and prisoners, and what kinds of subjects are discussed on “the inside.” Hutcheson memorialized dozens of such conversations, and the following is one of them. This particular conversation happened in the summer of 2015, before Hutcheson was maliciously placed in solitary confinement for five months. (The Bureau of Prisons later apologized to him.)

Hutcheson presents ideas here that give an entirely new slant on why people should actually want to embrace capitalism over socialism in order to enhance their self-fulfillment. Better than a mere intellectual explanation about capitalism versus socialism, Hutcheson opens a window into his life and shares ideas that most have not previously considered. For whatever

reason, young people today seem to be missing the most basic concepts about what makes America exceptional. In sharing these experiences from prison, Hutcheson provides a desperately needed insight to millions. Many who know and advise Hutcheson felt it was time for these writings to become public. Every human being, wherever he or she lives on earth, should read, study, and ponder the deeply profound writings of
Matthew D. Hutcheson.

Young Man: “Hey Hutch, you believe in capitalism, don’t you?”

Me: “Well, I observe it. It just is.”

Young Man: “What does that mean?”

Me: “Capitalism is not something that we merely believe in because we hope it is true. It is true because it is self-evident.”

Young Man: “Self-evident? I don’t understand.”

Me: “Capitalism is not something that is created by man. It can only be discovered. Capitalism develops and grows spontaneously, like grass or wildflowers, unless of course, someone tries to destroy it by cutting it down or poisoning it.”

Young Man: “Umm, that isn’t the answer I expected.”

Me: “What did you expect?”

Young Man: “I expected you to expound upon some philosophy. That’s what you usually do when I ask you a question.”

(Laughter)

Me: “Capitalism has lifted billions of people out of poverty. Nothing except the Gospel of Jesus Christ has helped more people.”

Young Man: “Dude, I don’t believe that. Capitalism has ruined my life and that of my family. I want socialism!”

Me: “Oh? How so?”

Young Man: “My skin is brown. Your skin is white. You have a ticket to success. I have a ticket to nowhere. I want socialism so I can finally get my share.”

Me: (Silence)

Young Man: “Don’t look at me like that! I am not

the cause of the unfairness that exists in the world. It's capitalists like you that created all of the unfairness that exists today."

Me: "Please, forgive me. I was not looking at you in a disrespectful way. I was just thinking."

Young Man: "About what?"

Me: "Why certain truths are self-evident to some and invisible to others."

Young Man: "Huh?"

Me: "Do you really think the color of your skin matters at all to a buyer of a brilliant product at a fair price?"

Young Man: "Man, what are you talkin' about?"

Me: "If you were to take my brain out of my head and place it on this table, and then take yours out and place it next to mine, no one would be able to tell which brain belonged to whom. Brains are brains. Outside of a head, they look the same no matter where you come from, what color your skin is, or what you believe."

Young Man: “That is messed up.”

Me: “I am not trying to be funny. I am serious. Great ideas originate in the mind. Those ideas can be converted into products which people will purchase if they believe those products will make their lives better.”

Young Man: “That is easy for you to say. You are white.”

Me: “It is the words and ideas that come out of the mind that matter. Nothing else matters. Brown people all over the world invent new products every day. They have been doing it for thousands of years—food, clothing, tools, intriguing inventions, etc.”

Young Man: “Yet they are still poor.”

Me: “True, many are. But it has to do with a lack of liberty, not skin color. Liberty can be ‘actual liberty’ because it is established in the nation in which they live. Or, liberty can be ‘perceived liberty’ because an individual thinks he or she is free, or oppressed, when he or she is not. ‘For as a person thinks in his heart, so is he.’”

Young Man: “Oh, come on! You are going to sit here and tell me my problems are all in my head?”

Me: “I am not diminishing one bit the difficulties you have had to face. What I am saying is that the pursuit of happiness and success requires capitalism. Socialism will suffocate what you hope to accomplish.”

Young Man: “Look, Hutch. I know that my people love you. All of them. That is cool. I just don’t think you understand.”

Me: “I know what I have observed while I have been in prison. I have seen the unfairness and injustice. But it is not what we are talking about here. We are talking about your mind, and what can come out of it to make your life better, and also to make the lives of others better, too.”

Young Man: “I’m just tired of losing the battle.”

Me: “You do not really want something just given to you, do you? Easy street is what you want? What about self-respect? What about the joy of accomplishment and success following struggle and adversity?”

Young Man: “Now you sound like one of *those* guys.”

Me: (Laughter) “I know what you mean. What you need is a map. It is not that you cannot attain success. You simply do not have the map.”

Young Man: “There is a map?”

Me: “Well, not literally. The map is understanding some very important principles. You see, capitalism is not a form of government. Rather, it is a naturally occurring phenomena. The sun comes up, flowers grow. Capitalism is also that simple.”

Young Man: “The sun? I don’t get it.”

Me: “It is metaphorical. The sun symbolizes liberty. Liberty rises, commerce and free trade thrive. If you have something good in your mind to offer, you will be rewarded.”

Young Man: “I’m confused. I think I must not understand what socialism is.”

Me: “Tell me your understanding of it.”

Young Man: “I don’t know. It’s the way of fairness. It’s a way to make sure everyone has a chance. It’s a way to

prevent the rich from keeping us down.”

Me: “I do not want to put words in your mouth, but if I understand, you think socialism is some benevolent way of interacting with each other? You think it is a more virtuous, higher plane of living?”

Young Man: “Exactly! It is the next step forward in the evolution of our society! And the rich people are preventing it from happening because they are selfish and greedy!”

Me: “Do most of those your age think and feel this way?”

Young Man: “All of them that I know.”

Me: “It is true that there are some ‘benign’ forms of semi-socialism around the world. Denmark, the UK, Canada, or even Switzerland, have hybrid economies in which limited socialism and capitalism coexist. But they are rare. Even in countries like Denmark, there is so much regulation that a person would have to give up many freedoms to live there. Eventually, those people who are okay with it, adjust. Those who want to be free, leave.”

Young Man: “Benign semi-socialism is rare? What do

you mean?”

Me: “Usually socialism becomes malignant. It spreads its tentacles into every aspect of a citizen’s life until the citizen can no longer choose his or her own destiny. He or she can no longer pursue happiness.”

Young Man: “Pursue happiness? You mean, like, ‘the pursuit of happiness’ from the Declaration of Independence?”

Me: “Correct. Fundamental to American belief is that our right to pursue happiness was given to us by God and that no man can take it from us unless we give it away or just let it go. Therein lies the danger.”

Young Man: “Danger? I don’t follow.”

Me: “Once a people collectively lose or give up one right, the risk of losing others, or even all rights, increases rapidly.”

Young Man: “But you said Denmark and Switzerland make it work. They don’t seem to be in danger.”

Me: “Those countries are the exceptions, not the rule.

What usually happens is oppression. Take what we saw with the former USSR, or the ‘Union of Soviet *Socialist* Republics,’ or the DPRK, North Korea’s ‘Democratic People’s Republic of Korea,’ or China’s ‘People’s Republic of China.’ Those citizens are unable to pursue true happiness.”

Young Man: “North Korea’s and China’s names don’t sound too bad. They have ‘People’s’ in their names.”

Me: “Using ‘People’s’ in the name of such a nation is merely euphemism.”

Young Man: “You-fuh-what?”

Me: “Euphemism. It means using a word to make a thing or situation sound better than it actually is.”

Young Man: “Oh.”

Me: “You see, the Nazis, Soviets, North Koreans, and the Chinese all have something in common. They have extinguished the individual’s right to pursue happiness. Those governments utilized brutal control over their citizens, including taking away private property—a great source of happiness for many—and earnings from

labor which resulted in individual poverty. They engaged in continuous surveillance, established concentration camps, tortured many, and committed executions without due process. The risk of flirting with socialism comes with the very real possibility of sliding down a slippery slope to misery.”

Young Man: “Those countries have not always been socialist?”

Me: “Not always. In fact, every one of them started out in an environment of capitalism. All nations do. Some do not understand the great gift that capitalism is—a gift from a Higher Authority—and they lose it by giving up their rights, one at a time, until misery and hopelessness result. It all begins with talk and ends in disaster.”

Young Man: “What does the pursuit of happiness have to do with capitalism?”

Me: “Everything, actually.”

Young Man: “How so?”

Me: “Let us talk about Hitler and the Nazis. Were they ahead of their time? Had Hitler and the Nazis reached

this enlightened and benevolent plane of which you speak?”

Young Man: “Huh? What are you talkin’ about?”

Me: “Tell me about the German Nazis.”

Young Man: “They were crazy people, evil people.”

Me: “What caused them to be crazy and evil?”

Young Man: “I don’t know. They hated Jews and Blacks. They hated everyone except Germans.”

Me: “Did the Nazis hate others because of their race? Did their hatred begin and end there?”

Young Man: “Man, Hutch. You are killin’ me. I don’t know! What’s your point?!”

Me: “I am not trying to frustrate you. I am trying to stimulate some deeper thought about the subject. The Nazis were primarily founded on economic ideas, not racial ones.”

Young Man: “Okay, so?”

Me: “Let me explain it this way . . . the official name of the Nazi party was the National *Socialist* German Workers’ Party. NAZI was just an abbreviation.”

Young Man: (Silence)

Me: “The Nazis, or socialists, placed the government over the economy, over the right of its citizens to pursue happiness. It placed the government over medicine, research, production of food, music and the arts, the news, entertainment, transportation, and more.”

Young Man: (Silence)

Me: “I have heard you making music. Socialism means an end to that. If a socialistic government wants you to make music, it will tell you what kind of music to make. Perhaps polka. How would you like that?”

Young Man: “What the . . . that’s crazy! I’d hate that!”

Me: “How do you think Jay-Z and Beyoncé would feel about being told they could no longer make music? Under socialism, Jay-Z may be driving a cement truck because the government dictates what its citizens do. Under socialism, the government controls the capital.

Whoever controls the capital, controls what is produced, how its production is administered, and how the product or service is distributed. Under socialism, Beyoncé may be told to make shoes or cut meat in a butcher shop. How do you think she would feel about it? What a waste of the gift within her!”

Young Man: (Silence)

Me: “Would Beyoncé be happy or sad if she could no longer pursue what she loves to do?”

Young Man: “Sad.”

Me: “Capitalism makes it possible for her to pursue her dreams, to pursue happiness. You see, socialism is not enlightenment. It is oppression. It is a violation of two fundamental laws that all people everywhere know to be true.”

Young Man: “Two laws?”

Me: “Yes. The first law is ‘do all you agree to do,’ which includes implicit agreements. The second law is ‘do not encroach on another person or another person’s property.’”

Young Man: “I don’t understand. What is an implicit agreement?”

Me: “Do you remember the Declaration of Independence?”

Young Man: “Well, I know what it is, but I have never read it.”

Me: “We hold these truths to be self-evident [naturally occurring or naturally obvious], 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.”

Young Man: “Right, I remember.”

Me: ““We the People”” implicitly agree with each other (first law) to protect the right of all other citizens to pursue happiness. In other words, an implicit agreement is one that is so obvious between two or more individuals that no one can argue with it, even if it is not written down in a contract or other formal agreement.”

Young Man: “Such as?”

Me: “Well, for example, when you earn a driver’s license, you implicitly agree with all other citizens that you will not drive drunk so you do not hurt them. All holders of a driver’s license implicitly agree to do the same.”

Young Man: “That actually makes sense!”

Me: “The most important implicit agreement understood by all Americans—or at least should be understood—is that we agree to protect each other’s rights from the encroachment of others, including ourselves and the government. It is how we remain free.”

Young Man: “Whoa, this is all starting to have an effect on me. This conversation is starting to change my thinking.”

Me: “What is happening is that you are discovering something that has always been there. Truth is that way. Our Founding Fathers described truth as ‘self-evident.’ It is naturally occurring. Man does not create truth—he can only discover it.”

Young Man: (Shaking his head with a huge smile, having *discovered* a life changing reality.)

Me: “There is one other thing I want to share with you.”

Young Man: “Okay, go ahead.”

Me: “The early European settlers of America wanted to control their own destiny and make their own decisions even if it were more difficult or less predictable than having a ‘king’ who dictated the course of their lives. Those settlers thrived on individual initiative, hard work, and freedom of choice.”

Young Man: “Yeah, they thrived on the backs of slaves.”

Me: “We can have a discussion about slavery another day. But for now, can we finish tackling the socialism versus capitalism topic?”

Young Man: “Sure.”

Me: “Although the early settlers could not at that time define what they wanted for their lives in academic terms, they could feel an innate drive within them to attain every human potentiality. They wanted to activate every capacity within them. The king of England was preventing that aspiration.”

Young Man: “Just like they later did with slaves.”

Me: “I know slavery is a sore subject, and I promise we will have the opportunity to discuss it soon. But for now, please let me explain some very important truths, okay?”

Young Man: “Okay.”

Me: “It was not until 1943 when psychologist Abraham Maslow theorized a ‘Hierarchy of Human Needs,’ which explained the innate drive within them. His research paper was called ‘A Theory of Human Motivation.’”

Young Man: “I’ve heard of Maslow.”

Me: “Excellent. He explained that the basic human need is food, shelter, and clothing—physiological needs. Then, safety from danger caused by man or beast. Then, love and belonging to a family or tribe. Then, respect of friends and community. Finally, self-actualization.”

Young Man: “What is self-actualization?”

Me: “It is the ‘attainment of one’s full potential’ and the ‘activation of all a person’s capacities.’ That particular definition of self-actualization was developed by a

famous psychologist named Carl Rogers, who has long since passed away.”

Young Man: “I like that thought . . . the thought to activate all of my potential.”

Me: “Yes, me too, and you will need capitalism to do it. Without capitalism, you will be prevented from going past the point of earning the respect of family and community.”

Young Man: “So, you are saying that if Beyoncé is forced to work in a butcher shop, she will be unable to fulfill the potential within her, which would limit the community esteem she would have otherwise enjoyed. She would not be the magnificent self-actualized entertainer she is today, and that would limit her pursuit and attainment of happiness?”

Me: “Precisely. Capitalism made Beyoncé and all others like her possible.”

Young Man: “I see.”

Me: “Think of Beyoncé and socialism as I quote Winston Churchill, the UK’s heroic World War II prime minister.

‘Socialism is a philosophy of failure, the creed of ignorance, and the gospel of envy. Its inherent virtue is the equal sharing of misery.’”

Young Man: “Beyoncé would be miserable if she could not express what is in her. I can see how socialism would prevent that expression and the attainment of her self-actualization.”

Me: “Self-actualization is possible for you, too. But it will not be if Americans embrace and operate at a lower plane of interaction, one that is based on restriction, not liberty. You will be able to achieve only so much. It is socialism, and socialism violates the implicit rule that all Americans have entered into with each other: Protect the right to pursue happiness, and do not encroach on another person’s right to obtain it.”

Young Man: “This conversation has changed my life.”

Me: “I am glad.”

★★★

This second conversation occurred in 2017 at FCI Lompoc, California. The conversation was between Matthew D.

Hutcheson and an immigrant in the United States illegally. Hutcheson is universally respected by all within the United States prison system—inmates and staff alike. This respect uniquely affords him the opportunity to have frank and candid conversations about very sensitive subjects with inmates which would otherwise be virtually impossible in any other setting. Hutcheson’s love and respect for these men comes through clearly.

Hispanic Man: “Hutch, my brothers asked me to speak to you.”

Me: *¿Cómo está usted, hermano? Todo bien?*

Hispanic Man: *¡Todo bien, gracias!*

Me: *Háblame.*

Hispanic Man: “I don’t want you to be angry with me. It seems like every time I try to discuss this with an American it ends up in an argument.”

Me: “Discuss what?”

Hispanic Man: “Promise me this will be a respectful conversation.”

Me: *Lo prometo.*

Hispanic Man: “*Gracias.* Why does Donald Trump hate Mexicans or anyone with dark skin for that matter?”

Me: “I know the media tries to portray him that way, but I do not think he hates anyone.”

Hispanic Man: “It sure sounds like he hates us. It sounds like many Americans hate us, too.”

Me: “Americans do not hate you. They simply do not like that you do not respect the two universal laws.”

Hispanic Man: “Universal laws? I don’t know what those are.”

Me: “You innately know. Every human being does.”

Hispanic Man: “What is innately?”

Me: “It means you understand without someone having to tell you. The knowledge or understanding simply is in you.”

Hispanic Man: *Entiendo.*

Me: “Here is the real issue, and it has nothing to do with your skin color. It has to do with breaking both laws, laws that Americans deeply value and respect, when someone sneaks into the United States illegally.”

Hispanic Man: “What are the two laws?”

Me: “The first law is ‘do everything you agree to do,’ which includes keeping implicit agreements. The second law is ‘do not encroach on another person or his property.’

Hispanic Man: “What is an implicit agreement?”

Me: “It is an agreement which honorable people make out of basic human decency and respect. For example, if you cook a meal for me in your restaurant, we have an implicit agreement that I will pay you for that meal.”

Hispanic Man: *¡Ah, ya veo!*

Me: “When someone enters the United States illegally, he or she breaks both laws. Americans do not like these violations.”

Hispanic Man: *Entiendo.*

Me: “Disrespect for the two universal laws demonstrates to American citizens that the violator does not understand something that Americans hold to be self-evident. Self-evident means ‘obvious, it goes without saying, or naturally occurring.’”

Hispanic Man: “This has never been explained to me. *Por favor continua.*”

Me: “All nations have laws, including boundaries. China, Russia, or even Canada for that matter, will not allow you into their countries just because you want to enter. They, too, want to know that you respect the two laws. Nations have implicit agreements, or perhaps even written treaties between them, stating that citizens of one country will not try to illegally sneak into the other. It is frowned upon everywhere, not just in the United States.”

Hispanic Man: *Okay, ya veo.*

Me: “So, a person breaks the first law when he or she disregards the implicit agreement or immigration treaties between nations. By breaking the first law, he or she encroaches on the people of that country.”

Hispanic Man: “What does encroach mean?”

Me: “It means *traspasar*—to trespass. When one encroaches, he or she violates another person’s space, property, assets, peace of mind, happiness, etc. He or she receives benefit from services paid for by American taxpayers without paying taxes themselves. Thus, it is viewed as theft of labor, investment, and tax revenue by the American people.”

Hispanic Man: (Listening)

Me: “While inside the United States you receive protections from police, the United States Armed Forces, direct economic benefits, and even the Constitution itself, yet you do not respect the laws that make those protections possible.”

Hispanic Man: *Entiendo.*

Me: “It does not matter what color a person’s skin is. Americans do not like violators of the two laws. Do you now understand why?”

Hispanic Man: *Ya veo.*

Me: “On the other hand, Americans love those who obey the two laws. If someone obeys law number one by entering the United States legally, Americans really respect him or her. It is those individuals who are celebrated and given help. It is those who are not likely to break law number two just like regular American citizens.”

Hispanic Man: “Well, why didn’t someone just explain that to us? That makes perfect sense to me. We value the United States just like you do. We want to live in the United States.”

Me: “No, that statement is not true. You do not value the United States. We are a nation of laws. If you truly valued the United States, you would first value and obey the two laws. We do not want violators of the two laws living here because we cannot be certain you have our backs.”

Hispanic Man: ¿*Que quieras decir?*

Me: “What I am saying is that fundamental to being an American citizen is an implicit expectation that we have among ourselves to protect the rights of others. It is the reason our Constitution is so powerful. It is the reason

America is so powerful. We do not let people, or even our government, encroach (law #2) on our fellow citizens. In fact, our government's primary purpose is to ensure that no one or nothing encroaches on the rights of its citizens."

Hispanic Man: (Listening)

Me: "Because you broke the two laws when you illegally came into the United States, we cannot trust that you have our backs. How can we know that you will protect our rights if you disrespect the laws that exist to protect those rights?"

Hispanic Man: *Ya veo. Nunca avía pensando en eso antes. Lo siento.*

Me: "*Gracias por decir eso.* We want you here if we know for sure you will obey the two laws. It all starts with obeying them in the first place. Skin color has absolutely nothing to do with it."

Hispanic Man: "Yes, I see that now. This conversation has really helped me to understand."

Me: "Will you teach your brothers these things and ask

them to teach their families?”

Hispanic Man: *Por supuesto.*

Me: *Gracias, hermano. Buenas noches.*

PART III

“Can Felons Vote?”

“CAN FELONS VOTE?”



DEAR FAM,

Well, we have entered our second week of quarantine. Technically, we are supposed to be confined to our rooms. The problem is that the phones, email, library and other necessities are elsewhere in the unit. So, inmates refuse to stay in their rooms. It is essentially an all-out rebellion, but there have been no severe fights (yet). Tension levels are growing though because no one is permitted outside.

Changing the subject, Lee shared with me the most tender story, and I re-share it with you with his permission.

Last week, Lee's 96-year-old father-in-law (WWII hero vet) asked him about the message he (Lee) had recently seen online from his pastor, Steve Holt. His

sermon was on humility being the cardinal virtue. The conversation went like this:

Dee: “How did the online presentation go?”

Lee: “Oh, it was magnificent. Steve hit it out of the park again.”

Dee: “What was it about?”

Lee: “It was about humility being the cardinal virtue.”

Dee: “What is virtue?”

Lee: “It is the goodness of a human being, those attributes which make a man or woman affect the lives of others for the better.”

Dee: “I think virtue means the character of someone who is convicted of a crime he did not commit, going to prison an innocent man, not becoming resentful or bitter, continuing to be a great husband and father, and actually rising above it all to thrive, lead, and inspire others for the better, under impossible obstacles. It is what virtue looks like to me.”

Lee: (with a lump in his throat) “That is exactly right! You hit the nail right on the head! That is virtue!”

When Lee shared that story with me, my eyes filled and I had a lump in my throat, too. How could such a touching comment not have that effect on someone? I wanted to share it to memorialize for my grandchildren that they may know who their grandpa was/is.

You might find it interesting to know how the word *virtue* has been defined by others over the ages.

The Greek and Roman philosophers called *virtue* the “mean between the extremes.”

The Founding Fathers defined *virtue* as “excellence.”

Those of the Victorian age defined *virtue* as “chastity.”

Changing the subject once again, I would like to share a recent interesting conversation.

This week a group of about 30 inmates were in

the common area where the TVs, ice machines, pool tables, and CorrLinks computers are. I was listening to a conversation between several inmates and the camp officer about the lockdown, quarantine, COVID-19 in general, and the upcoming election. A somewhat heated argument broke out about what would happen if President Trump died from the COVID virus. Who would succeed him as president, and who succeeds that person, and so on?

Then, the discussion evolved into the electoral college and whether inmates can vote after serving their sentences. It was a conversation worth memorializing, so I immediately wrote it down.

The conversation went as follows as I sat at the CorrLinks computer typing an email:

(Names have been changed.)

Inmate Smith: “What would happen if President Trump died from corona?”

Inmate Jones: “The U.S. Secretary of State would become the president.”

Inmate Mays: “That’s not true. The vice president succeeds him.”

Jones: “That’s not true. I am 100% certain it is the secretary of state.”

Johnson: “Then why did Lyndon B. Johnson become president after JFK was assassinated?”

Jones: (Silence)

Johnson: “Yeah, and Teddy Roosevelt after McKinley?”

Jones: “How do you know that?”

Smith: “There’s Hutch. Let’s ask him.”

Jones: “Don’t ask Hutch. Leave him out of this conversation.” (I heard him ask to keep me out of the conversation.)

Johnson: “Hey, Hutch!”

Me: “Hi fellas. What’s up?”

Johnson: “Who becomes president if the elected

president dies?”

Me: “The vice president.”

Mays: “I told you.”

Me: “The first three in the line of presidential succession are elected officials.”

Johnson: “Name them.”

Me: “The vice president (Mike Pence), the speaker of the house (Nancy Pelosi), the president pro tempore (Chuck Grassley), which is Latin for ‘temporary president.’ (‘Tempore’ is pronounced ‘tem-pour-ay,’ but most people colloquially pronounce it ‘tem-pour-ee.’) Remember, the vice president is the actual president of the Senate, so the Senate pro tempore serves as acting president.”

Smith: “Who are the others?”

Me: “The others are all non-elected. They are appointed by the president and serve as secretaries, or in other words, chiefs over an executive branch department or agency. A federal department or agency is essentially the same thing,

and its professional full-time employees constitute a bureaucracy. So, the secretary of state, which is what I think Jones meant, is the first non-elected official in the line of presidential succession.”

Jones: “Yes, that’s what I meant!”

Me: “I’ll break it down for you.

- Secretary of State = protection of relationships with other nations
- Secretary of Treasury = protection of and control over America’s money
- Secretary of Defense = protection of American citizens from aggressive foreign governments or other actors
- Attorney General (Secretary of Justice) = protection against crime; justice after crime
- Secretary of Interior = protection of America’s natural resources
- Secretary of Agriculture = protection of America’s farmers; protection of consumers of agricultural products
- Secretary of Commerce = protection of free trade
- Secretary of Health and Human Services = protection of access to and quality of health care services

- Secretary of Housing and Urban Development = protection of fair and equal access to housing
- Secretary of Transportation = protection of and/or improving roads, rails, air travel infrastructure, traveler safety
- Secretary of Energy = protection of natural energy sources; regulation of access to energy sources
- Secretary of Education = protection of quality of public education
- Secretary of Veteran Affairs = protection of retired military; assistance in health care, home ownership, education, etc.
- Secretary of Homeland Security = protection from nonconventional threats abroad (like terrorism, cyber-attacks, etc.)”

Smith: “Whoa, that is a lot of information! Who decides where a cabinet secretary falls in the line of succession?”

Me: “The order is based upon when the cabinet position was first created. When the United States was newly formed, the first position created by George Washington was the secretary of state. It was an appointment accepted and filled by Thomas Jefferson.”

Smith: “What happens if all of the successors were to

die at the same time?”

Me: “The House of Representatives would elect a speaker. The speaker would then immediately advance to the presidency.”

Johnson: “Fascinating! I also want to know how the electoral college works.”

Smith: “And I would like to know why felons are not permitted to vote. That has always bothered me.”

Me: “Alright.” Looking at Johnson, I said, “Would it be alright if I explained the electoral college first?”

Johnson: “Sure.”

Me: “The political parties of each state identify potential electors from each political party. Depending on how the election is structured (each state administers its own election), voters either vote for an elector directly or the state considers a vote for a presidential candidate to be a vote for that party’s electors. The number of electors directly corresponds to the number of members of the United States Congress elected from that state. Remember, Congress consists of two chambers: The

House of Representatives and the Senate. So, in Colorado there are seven members of the House of Representatives. There are two United States senators, as there are two from every other state. That makes nine, which means this November there will be nine electors in Colorado. If a Republican candidate wins, then the nine electors will be the Republican ones. If a Democrat wins, the electors will be the Democrat ones. The electors will vote together in a bloc.”

Johnson: “How many total United States electors are there?”

Me: “Well, let us count them. There are 435 members of the House of Representatives. That number has not changed since 1929. There are 100 senators. That number has not changed since 1787 when the Constitution was adopted as the framework of government for the United States of America.”

Johnson: “That makes 535 electors!”

Me: “But don’t forget the three electors granted to the District of Columbia.”

Johnson: “So that makes 538 electors?”

Me: “Right! On January 6th, following the states’ election for president, the state electors appear before Congress and announce which candidate received which state elector votes.”

Johnson: “Always on January 6th following the election?”

Me: “Always. The candidate who received a majority of elector votes, or at least 270, will become president.”

Johnson: “Where did the electors come from anyway? Whose big idea was that?”

Me: “The electoral college, or the group of electors, is a provision within the United States Constitution, Article II, Section 1. It is a safety counterbalance to make sure small, but densely populated areas (such as New York City) do not have a distorting and disproportionate effect on an election outcome. If not for the electoral college, a half-dozen states could determine the outcome of a presidential election based on population alone and no one else in the United States would have a say. It would be as though the votes in the other, say 44 states, did not matter at all.”

Entire group (including officer): (Listening intently)

Me: “The electoral college ensures that the outcome in every state is fairly represented in the final, ultimate outcome.”

Johnson: “Fascinating!”

Me: “There have been five elections in which the winner of the popular vote did not become president because the other candidate had more electoral votes.”

Johnson: “Name one example.”

Me: “Well, take the last election in 2016. Hillary Clinton won the popular vote, but Trump won in an electoral college landslide. There were four other such instances: 1824, 1876, 1888, and 2000 (Bush vs. Gore).”

Johnson: “Thanks, awesome.”

Me: “May I change the subject to Smith’s complaint about why felons are not permitted to vote?”

Johnson: “Of course.”

Me: “When I was at FCI Safford, I was taken on a road trip to visit a physician. While on that trip, one of the

guards said, in essence, ‘It’s kind of a bummer you will never be able to vote again.’”

I asked him, “Why do you say that?”

He said, “Because you are a felon. Felons can’t vote in a federal election.”

I said, “Neither can you.”

The guard was stunned. He did not know what to say except, “What do you mean by that?”

Continuing, I said, “There is no such thing as a federal election.”

Crickets. He had no idea what I was talking about.

I went on to explain that one of the most tragic “tricks” ever perpetrated upon a large segment of Americans is the statement that a felon cannot vote in a federal election. It is what I call a “true lie.”

It is true because there is **no such thing as a federal election. There never has been such a thing. It is true that no one can vote in one.** There are instead 50

state elections. Each state has its own election laws and criteria. Each state's secretary of state administers the election. For example, all ballots come from the secretary of state—therefore, it is the secretary of state who is the gatekeeper. If the secretary of state says a felon can vote, he or she can—period.

I explained it to the guard, and he was dumbfounded. This “true lie” was a trick against those who do not understand the political system. The “true lie” has become anchored in the minds of Americans as immutable truth. But it is not true that felons are unable to vote. He or she may vote for president in a **state** election if his or her secretary of state permits it based on that state's election laws.

There are over 70 million Americans who have some form of criminal record, and almost all of them believe, falsely, they are not permitted to vote. It is a tragedy.

It is also false that those 70 million Americans would automatically vote Democrat. Believe me, most of them understand now what the Democrats are all about. They want to be empowered and to be free, not victims and dependent upon government.

So, back to our recent discussion with Smith, Jones, Mays, Johnson, and the others.

Me: (to Smith) “Did I answer your question?”

Smith: “Yes, absolutely! I am blown away! I had no idea that I have been told a lie for so long. I actually believed it!”

Me: “Well, you have been told a truth, but one that is misleading. There is no such thing as a federal election. There are only state elections. You may vote if the secretary of your state says that you can vote. Two states (Maine and Vermont) allow inmates to vote while incarcerated. Thirty-seven states let felons vote immediately, or soon after release. The other eleven states have varying rules or restrictions. Study it when you can.”

Smith: “Amazing. Thank you.”

Me: “Glad I could help.”

Jones: “Hey, um . . . I’m sorry for what I said earlier.”

Me: “No worries, bro. Upon release, go home and vote!”

Jones: “I will!”

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PART IV

Reflections on America

REFLECTIONS ON AMERICA



The following are selections of thoughts and feelings about America from emails sent by Matthew D. Hutcheson to family and friends while incarcerated in federal prison.

MONDAY, MAY 30, 2016

Dear Fam,

There are two things on my mind today. Memorial Day is a special holiday for two reasons. The obvious, that we celebrate the lives and sacrifices of our military, and also that of our deceased families. Also, because my birthday normally falls on or around Memorial Day, I probably think more about it than I might otherwise.

Annette sent me a book called *The Washington Hypothesis* by Timothy Ballard. All of you know how

much I am fascinated by our Founding Fathers and always have been. Franklin, Madison, Adams, Jefferson, Washington, and Paine (Adam Smith and Francis Hutcheson as foreign influences) have my utmost respect and admiration.

In Ballard's book he shares many profound quotes by Washington. I would like to pass along two to you that have particular relevance to us, right now, given the state of our nation and the political environment in which we find ourselves.

Washington said, as passed along by army chaplains to the army, "The blessing and protection of Heaven are at all times necessary but especially so in times of public distress and danger. [General Washington] hopes and trusts that every officer and man, will endeavor so to live, and act, as becomes a Christian soldier defending the dearest Rights and Liberties of his country."

Around July 9, 1776, just after having read the Declaration of Independence to his army, Washington once again asked each soldier to "endeavor to check [bad behavior] and . . . reflect, that we can have little hopes of the blessing of Heaven on our Arms, if we insult it by our impiety and folly."

There has never been a time where defending our dearest rights and liberties has been more important—since the days of Washington—than right now. We must endeavor to live and act in such a way that invites the help of Heaven. We must not insult our need of blessings from Heaven by our impiety and folly.

I ask that every member of my family remember these words and remember that if we are to preserve the United States of America, we, too, must never forget that our rights and liberties are contingent upon our faithfulness to these principles. Our liberty can be lost. We must remember and act accordingly.

★ ★ ★

Sunday, August 7, 2016

One of the most difficult experiences in life a man or woman must navigate is that of the “about-face.” We all make them at least once in our lives. Sometimes the about-face is just about a change in beliefs or positions that really only affect ourselves. Sometimes it is more serious because it affects others in unforeseen ways.

There are many prominent examples throughout history. Abraham of old was commanded to sacrifice Isaac even though it was against God's proclaimed law. Saul of Tarsus did an about-face when the Lord appeared to him on the road to Damascus. Benjamin Franklin was not, initially, a proponent of independence. Only until after a very unpleasant experience before the British Parliament following the Stamp Act and the Boston Tea Party events did he disavow the British throne and become a hero of the revolution. Until then, he was loyal to the king. That is a little-known historical fact.

Each of these "about-faces" came with some measure of distress and difficulty of the person making the change, and those who were affected by it. Surely, there was no shortage of "but you said . . ." from critics who would accuse them of hypocrisy or being a "flip-flopper." And the person making the about-face is no doubt very aware of what he once said or what position/belief he once held.

I've come to the conclusion that our Father in Heaven presents seemingly impossible crossroads before us to see if we will make an about-face when one should be made. Such decisions come with distress and soul searching. Sometimes the about-face will cause a temporary "crisis" —or at least it will temporarily seem that way.

A friend gave me a copy of a book called *The Lincoln Hypothesis*. It is written by the same author as *The Washington Hypothesis* I have mentioned in other updates. From the book, I have learned that Abraham Lincoln experienced, perhaps, the most difficult “about-face” of all.

Promises made by politicians are common. We usually don't think much about them. For example, Abraham Lincoln stated more than once that he had no intention of ending slavery. During his first inaugural address, President Lincoln said he had “no purpose, directly or indirectly, to interfere with the institution of slavery.” Once again, after the Civil War began, he said that he “had no intention of making emancipation the war aim.” But Lincoln also said, “Whatever shall appear to be God's will, I will do.” And God held him to it.

During the horrors of the Civil War, it dawned on Lincoln that the war would not end until he covenanted with the Almighty to end slavery—and only if the Almighty knew Lincoln would keep his covenant. He first secretly proposed emancipation to Henry Seward, Lincoln's secretary of state. He was so frightened to make this widely known, but God had revealed His will to President Lincoln, and he yielded to it.

After a series of miracles similar to those experienced by George Washington during the Revolutionary War, Abraham Lincoln pronounced the Emancipation Proclamation in 1863—an “about-face.” And one of the most important about-faces ever made.

Explaining his decision, President Lincoln said, “In giving freedom to the slave, we assure freedom to the free.” So true.

It seems like great events in history, or in our personal lives, frequently swing on the hinge of an “about-face.” We hold those who make the difficult decision to about-face as heroes.

Can you imagine the world without Abraham-of-old’s about-face? What about that of Saul of Tarsus? What about that of Benjamin Franklin? What about Abraham Lincoln?

Imagine our personal world without those about-faces we have made. What about those we will make, or should make? What will our world look like if we don’t make the needed about-face?

Whether the decision is that of a prophet, a president,

a colleague, friend, sibling, parent, child, or a government, we know the need for an about-face when we see it. Often it comes following the quiet commitment in the heart; “Whatever shall appear to be God’s will, I will do.” Then the “crisis” of the decision is put before us. Those who make the “about-face” become heroes to us all, and to many more not known and yet unborn. Let us be “about-face heroes.”

My love and respect, Matt

★ ★ ★

Sunday, October 23, 2016

It is true that freedom is a God-given right. But men do not always honor God. Some men (or women) think that “rights” are reserved for the politically connected or influential because of their money. Many actually believe that those who do not fit into one of those categories don’t really have “rights.” Instead, they are annoyances that must be “managed” or “manipulated” for political gain.

My singular fear right now, given this most peculiar

2016 election, is that the United States of America is becoming the United States vs. US (U.S. vs. US). Scary thought. Remember, the government is not “We the People.” Washington, D.C. has forgotten that. Bureaucracies have forgotten that. Bureaucrats think “they” are the “People,” and that everyone else outside of government is simply a future inmate just waiting his or her turn.

That point of view is not intended to sound jaded or discouraging. On the contrary—it is intended to cause an awakening in each American citizen to reassert his or her power, so the servants remember who their master is. And in turn, that the master of government remembers who its MASTER is. This great nation doesn’t belong to us. It belongs to the Almighty, and we need to be better stewards of the rights and freedoms given to us by HIM.

No matter what, it is imperative that those of you who are old enough to vote SHOULD vote. Being an American citizen requires effort and responsibility.

Things seem pretty bad right now, but keep the faith. Maintain your hope and cheerful attitude. Remember, everyone “likes to be around [people] who have a sunny disposition.” Let your lights shine. Let them burn bright. And always remember that we are the master of

government, and the Almighty is the master of US.

Life in the Extreme, Matt

★ ★ ★

Sunday, December 31, 2017

I want to share a concluding thought about Winston Churchill. I've always admired him more than any other political figure except for our Founding Fathers and a handful of American presidents. In 2011, I was honored with an introduction to, if I remember correctly, Churchill's grand (or perhaps great-grand) daughter, who was getting up there in age, but was still sharp as a tack. She shared many Churchill stories with me that are not commonly known, for which I will forever be grateful. That interaction affected me deeply.

From May 10, 1940 through around August 1945, Churchill led Europe, and the world, in the most terrible and ultimately triumphant five years mankind has ever known. My family and I are likewise emerging from the most terrible and ultimately triumphant five years of our lives. It has been war, literally, in the intellectual/emotional

sense. It has been rough-and-tumble. My case is at the heart of THE two domestic public policy priorities and is thus in the eye of the national political storm. It may be one of the most important political stories the public has never heard—yet. We have handled it all with decorum and dignity. I believe when our story is finally told, it will be sufficient to inspire Americans and those around the world to love and respect each other more in spite of crushing misunderstanding, adversity and opposition.

When Churchill was 79 years old, he gave his final speech on May 1, 1955. He said, “The day may dawn when fair play, love for one’s fellow men, respect for justice and freedom, will enable tormented generations to march forth serene and triumphant from the hideous epoch in which we have to dwell. Meanwhile, never flinch, never weary, never despair.” That’s right! That’s what I’m talking about right there! Remember that Churchill quote!

According to biographer Paul Johnson (Churchill, Paul Johnson, Penguin, 2009, pg. 162), Churchill was a “Fellow of the Royal Society, an Elder Brother of Trinity House, a Lord Warden of the Cinque Ports, a Royal Academician, a university chancellor, a Nobel Prizeman, a Knight of the Garter, a Companion of Honour, and a

member of the Order of Merit. Scores of towns made him an honorary citizen, dozens of universities awarded honorary degrees, and thirteen countries gave him medals. He hunted big game and won a score of races. He had a large and much-loved family and countless friends.”

Those are all quite the honors. He, having “much-loved family and countless friends,” is the crown-jewel-honor of them all. That is how I feel toward all of you. You are the honor and crown jewels of my life.

★ ★ ★

Sunday, February 4, 2018

As I pondered the “incident,” I thought about liberty and what liberty requires of the people who demand it. Some complain that the United States has more incarcerated than all other nations combined; even I have cited that statistic. (The Harvard Law Review published it in its January 2017 criminal justice reform proposal to the U.S. government.) Perhaps the incarcerated statistic is true. But the more liberty the people claim, the more excellent behavior is required of the people.

Being a citizen of the United States comes with many solemn responsibilities—two of the most important and fundamental principles are (1) Do all we agree to do, and (2) Don't encroach on the property or person of others. Most people are in prison for violating one of those two principles.

Sometime just prior to the “incident,” and amid the growing tension on the compound, I helped a young man, an Asian, with a college paper which I called “The American Hypothesis.” In truth, I didn't “help” him. I just ghost wrote the entire thing because he couldn't. He just didn't have a sufficient mastery of the English language, and he was doing the best he could. In any event, I wrote his college paper about why America will survive and thrive, come what may.

If you recall, I emailed that to you in the June 11, 2017 update. You may choose to read it again if you still have a copy (I wish I could include a copy here). In spite of all the violence and unrest at Lompoc, my love for America grew like never before. I did not become jaded. I simply came to understand clearly that America is for those who cherish liberty. Those who don't cherish liberty end up in prison because they love chaos and disorder. Not everyone thinks and/or feels that way. But there are

many who just don't "get it," and perhaps aren't suited for a free society.

If my Lompoc experience did anything, it forever augmented my love and adoration for America the beautiful. Never, ever take her for granted. She is mercy embodied (meaning earthly mercy), and those who can't or won't appreciate and abide in her mercy (which requires obeying laws upon which mercy is predicated) will live without it, in prison.

PART V

“Women Make America Great”

“WOMEN MAKE AMERICA GREAT”



REPEATEDLY THROUGHOUT HISTORY, some underdog figure has stood up and said, “No more! Things must change!” If the social and political environment is ready for new ideas, the seeds are planted by that bravery.

Such seeds usually take decades, or even centuries, to take root, to grow, and eventually to bear fruit.

Some of the most impressively brave underdogs have been women. It is those brave women who have made America great.

I grew up in a traditional family consisting of my father, mother, and five sisters. My father and grandfathers were overtly respectful to my mother and sisters. My grandfathers and father were the best examples of how a man should treat his wife and daughters a boy could

ever have.

Growing up, I do not think it ever occurred to me that women around the world have not always been treated the way my paternal role models treated the women in their lives. When, eventually, I realized that millions (if not billions) of women on earth were oppressed to some degree, I felt heartbreak and deep sadness.

You see, in my world, women are intellectual, brave, and innovative.

In my world, women are talented, strong, assertive, outspoken, and independent. I love it.

In my world, women are my heroes.

After three decades of marriage to the greatest woman on earth, and the blessing of two equally magnificent daughters who have given me nothing but joy and pride, I still cannot understand how any man, anywhere, could view a woman as “less than.” It simply does not compute.

Much thought has gone into why the women in my life are preeminent. Why does it seem completely natural? Because it is the way it should be. If I lived in any

of nearly one hundred other nations, it would not be so.

In some nations, women and girls are just property to be bought and sold for whatever purpose. The thought makes me cringe. In America, however, women are pillars. Women are admired and revered. Today in America we practically worship the ground women walk on.

But sadly, it has not always been that way.

Women in America began fighting for their individual rights the moment the United States Constitution gave them the legal vehicle and pathway to demand equality.

First and foremost in that struggle was the right to vote.

The Latin word *suffragium* means “voting tablet.” Possessing a “voting tablet” gave its possessor the right to vote. *Suffragium*, therefore, means “a vote, the right to vote.”

As British common law developed, which was the basis of law in the Colonies and later in the United States, *suffragium* was replaced with an easier word to pronounce and to remember: *suffrage*. It, like the original

Latin, means “the right or privilege of casting a vote at a public election.” In other words, *suffrage* means the *right to vote*.

Not every American enjoyed this right. In 1897 in *A Treatise on the American Law of Elections* authored by George W. McCrary, he explained the following:

“In the United States suffrage is a privilege, franchise or trust conferred by the people upon such persons as it deems fittest to represent it in the choice of magistrates or in the performance of political duties which it would be inexpedient or inconvenient for the people to perform in a body. The person upon whom the franchise is conferred is called an elector or a voter. No community extends suffrage to all persons, but places such restrictions upon it as may best subserve the ends of government.”

Well, that idea just would not do. Great women put their proverbial feet down. Thus began America’s monumental “Women’s Suffrage” movement.

Yet, long before the ratification and effectuation of the Nineteenth Amendment (1920), some communities did in fact celebrate and encourage voting by women.

(The Nineteenth Amendment states, “The right of citizens of the United States to vote shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any State on account of sex.”)

It may surprise some readers to learn that the voting rights and status women enjoy today began in Utah. Regrettably, Utah is often misunderstood to be a place that culturally oppresses women. Just the opposite is true. On February 14, 1870, Utah granted the right to all women within the Utah territory (not yet a state) to vote. Seraph Young Ford became the very first woman in the United States to legally cast a vote.

Needless to say, the leadership shown by Utah women caught the attention of national suffrage leaders Susan B. Anthony and Elizabeth Cady Stanton. Those two women, and others, gained inspiration and vision from brave Utah women who stood up and said, “No more! Things must change! We demand to be heard! We demand to vote!”

“Liberty and justice for all.”

The liberty to vote for justice.

Utah women led the way.

Utah eventually became the 45th state in 1896. The strangest thing happened. Two individuals decided to run for the United States Senate. One was a man, the other, a woman. She was esteemed by many to be one of the most educated women in the United States. She defeated her male opponent for the United States Senate becoming the first woman Senator.

Her name was Dr. Martha Hughes Cannon.

The man she defeated was her husband.

By the time this book is published, Cannon's statue will be immortalized in the Rotunda of the United States Capitol building memorializing the great, heroic strides and accomplishments women have made, and also to celebrate the 150th anniversary of the first vote cast by any woman in the United States by Seraph Young Ford of Utah.

Give credit where credit is due.

Can there be any doubt about why my mother and sisters are the great leaders that they are? They, too, are

from Utah. That state has produced some of the world's greatest leaders, period. They have improved life for men and women, boys and girls, all around the globe for the better and have made America great.

Another great woman leader just passed away—Ruth Bader Ginsburg.

She was firm in her beliefs, but she was very fair and reasonable as well. One of her best friends was staunch conservative Justice Antonin Scalia.

Are you a woman who has her own credit card, mortgage, job while pregnant, equal pay, equal pension, able to make her own medical decisions, and receive better treatment if disabled? You can thank Ruth Bader Ginsburg.

Some of her rulings are controversial. Some Americans have very strong feelings about her. But she was, nonetheless, America's second female Supreme Court justice, and tirelessly served the American people from 1993 through 2020. She is a hero to many, and even those who disagree with her views should not attempt to diminish her life's accomplishments, her bravery, and her resolve. Attack the idea, not the person.

What do my wife, my daughters, my mother, my sisters, Seraph Young Ford, Dr. Martha Hughes Cannon, and Ruth Bader Ginsburg all have in common? They are courageous women who demanded that things change for the better and actually succeeded in their respective spheres. All our lives are better because of these great women.

To suggest America is not great is to insult the greatness of the women who gave their entire lives to America's cause. America is truly great because America's women are great.

PART VI

Thoughts on Liberty

THOUGHTS ON LIBERTY



“Straight is the gate and narrow is the way that leads to liberty, and few nations, if any, have found it.”

—John Adams

“Considered together, the ten amendments in the Bill of Rights outline the most comprehensive protection of individual freedom ever written.”

—Ellen Alderman and Caroline Kennedy

“Want to remain free? Never forget the two ‘tens.’ The Ten Commandments and the Ten Amendments. Together, Liberty’s Twenty.”

—Matthew D. Hutcheson

“A man can be destroyed but not defeated.”

—Ernest Hemingway



“America is essentially a dream, a dream as yet unfulfilled. It is a dream of a land where men of all races, of all nationalities, and of all creeds can live together as brothers.”

—Martin Luther King, Jr.

“It may get me crucified. I may even die. But I want it said even if I die in the struggle that ‘He died to make men free.’”

—Martin Luther King, Jr.

“The ultimate measure of a man is not where he stands

in moments of comfort and convenience, but where he stands at times of challenge and controversy.”

—Martin Luther King, Jr.

“The greatest asset of any nation is the spirit of its people, and the greatest danger that can menace any nation is the breakdown of that spirit.”

—George B. Cortelyou

“What light is to the eyes
What air is to the lungs
What love is to the heart
Without liberty the brain is a dungeon
Where the chained thoughts die
With their pinions pressed
Against the hingeless doors.”

—Robert G. Ingersoll

“Liberty, when it begins to take root, is a plant of rapid growth.”

—George Washington

“We Americans are the peculiar, chosen people—the Israel of our time; we bear the ark of the liberties of the world.”

—Herman Melville

“A Bill of Rights is what the people are entitled to against every government on earth, general or particular; and what no just government should refuse, or rest on inference.”

—Thomas Jefferson

“In a chariot of light from the regions of day
The Goddess of Liberty came
Ten Thousand celestials directed the way
And hither conducted the dame
A fair budding branch from the gardens above
Where millions with millions agree
She brought in her hand as a pledge of her love
And the plant she named Liberty Tree.”

—Thomas Paine

“I am in prison. I cannot imagine in my current state what liberty will feel like. Liberation from prison will probably feel similar to what the colonists felt when the war ended.”

—Matthew D. Hutcheson

“Ubi libertas ibi patria.” (Where liberty is, there is my country.)

—James Otis

“The same God who gave us life, gave us liberty at the same time.”

—Thomas Jefferson

“Liberty is its own reward.”

—Woodrow Wilson

“Liberty, like charity, must begin at home.”

—James B. Conant



“The republic is a dream. Nothing happens unless first a dream.”

—Carl Sandburg

“Puritanism, believing itself quick with the seed of

religious liberty, laid, without knowing it, the egg of democracy.”

—James Russell Lowell

“Among the natural rights of Colonists are these: First, a right to life; Secondly, to liberty; Thirdly, to property; together with the right to support and defend them in the best manner they can.”

—Samuel Adams

“Make no mistake; the American Revolution was not fought to obtain freedom, but to preserve liberties that Americans already had as colonials. Independence was no conscious goal, secretly nurtured in cellar or jungle by bearded conspirators, but a reluctant last resort, to preserve, ‘life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.’”

—Samuel Eliot Morison



“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 of 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.”

—The Declaration of Independence

“Proclaim liberty throughout the land unto all the inhabitants thereof.”

—Leviticus 25:10, inscribed on the Liberty Bell

“Ye sons of Columbia, who bravely have fought,
For those rights which unstain’d from your sires you
descended,
May you long taste the blessings your valor has brought,
And your sons reap the soil which your fathers defended.

‘Mid the reign of mild peace,
May your nation increase,

With the glory of Rome and the wisdom of Greece;
And ne'er may the sons of Columbia be slaves,

While the earth bears a plant, or the sea rolls its waves,
Let fame to the world sound America's voice,
No intrigue can her sons from the government sever;
Her pride is her Adams—his laws are her choice,
And shall flourish till Liberty slumber forever!

Then unite heart and hand,
Like Leonidas band,
And swear to the God of the ocean and land,
That ne'er shall the sons of Columbia be slaves,
While the earth bears a plant, or the sea rolls its waves.”

—Robert Treat Paine, Jr.

“Is life so dear, or peace so sweet, as to be purchased at the price of chains and slavery? Forbid it, Almighty God! I know not what course others take; but as for me, give me liberty or give me death!”

—Patrick Henry

“America is one of the best examples, when you read its history, about extremism. Old Patrick Henry said, ‘liberty or death’—that’s extreme, very extreme.”

—Malcolm X

“I would remind you that extremism in the defense of liberty is no vice. And let me remind you that moderation in the pursuit of justice is no virtue.”

—Barry Goldwater

“Liberty has never come from the government. Liberty has always come from the subjects of government. The history of liberty is a history of resistance. The history of liberty is a history of the limitation of governmental power, not the increase of it.”

—Woodrow Wilson



“Liberty exists in proportion to wholesome restraint.”

—Daniel Webster

“Every word [of the Constitution] decides a question between power and liberty.”

—James Madison

“The preservation of the sacred fire of liberty and the destiny of the republican model of government are justly considered, perhaps, as deeply, as finally, staked on the experiment entrusted to the hands of the American people.”

—George Washington

“Liberty is the soul’s right to breathe, and when it cannot take a long breath, laws are girdled too tight.”

—Henry Ward Beecher

“Liberty does not make all men perfect nor all society secure. But it has provided more solid progress and happiness and decency for more people than any other philosophy of government in history.”

—Harry S. Truman

“No people ever lost their liberties unless they themselves first became corrupt. The people are the safeguards of their own liberties, and I rely wholly on them to guard themselves.”

—Andrew Jackson



“Four score and seven years ago, our fathers brought forth on this continent a new nation, conceived in liberty, and dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal.”

—Abraham Lincoln

“God gave us Lincoln and Liberty, let us fight for both.”

—Ulysses S. Grant

“I had rather take my chance that some traitors will escape detection than spread abroad a spirit of general suspicion and disgust, which accepts rumor and gossip in place of undismayed and unintended inquiry . . . That community is already in the process of dissolution where each man begins to eye his neighbor as a possible

enemy, where nonconformity with the accepted creed, political as well as religious, is a mark of disaffection; where denunciation, without specification or backing, takes the place of evidence; where orthodoxy chokes freedom of dissent; where faith in the eventual supremacy of reason has become so timid that we dare not enter our convictions in the open lists, to win or lose . . . The mutual confidence on which all else depends can be maintained only by an open mind and a brave reliance upon free discussion.”

—Learned Hand

“God grants liberty only to those who love it and are always ready to guard and defend it.”

—Daniel Webster

“Liberty and order will never be *perfectly* safe, until a trespass on the constitutional provisions for either, shall be felt with the same keenness that resents an invasion of the dearest rights; until every citizen shall be an Argus to espy, and an Aegeon to avenge, the unhallowed deed.”

—James Madison

“If a man hasn’t discovered something that he will die for, he isn’t fit to live.”

—Martin Luther King, Jr.

“Make men large and strong, and tyranny will bankrupt itself in making shackles for them.”

—Henry Ward Beecher

“I have sworn upon the altar of God eternal hostility against every form of tyranny over the mind of man.”

—Thomas Jefferson

“The numbers of men in all ages have preferred ease, slumber, and good cheer to liberty, when they have been in competition.”

—John Adams

“A nation is great when its citizens are good. America’s citizens have always been good, which is why America has always been great.”

—Matthew D. Hutcheson

“They have rights who dare maintain them.”

—James Russell Lowell

“Whether in chains or in laurels, Liberty knows nothing but victories.”

—Wendell Phillips



“The fight must go on. The cause of civil liberty must not be surrendered at the end of one or even one hundred defeats.”

—Abraham Lincoln

“Timid men prefer the calm of despotism to the boisterous sea of liberty.”

—Thomas Jefferson

“Each individual American must have courage to present his or her idea or complaint in the public square; to lay it bare to criticism, to test it, to prove it, and

respectfully accept its rejection and defeat if it comes to that. If accepted, graciously give it as your gift to society. If you have an idea, have the courage to bring it forth and let the people decide whether it is good for all.”

—Matthew D. Hutcheson

“Our fathers’ God to Thee
Author of liberty,
To Thee we sing.
Long may our land be bright,
With freedom’s holy light,
Protect us by Thy might,
Great God our King!”

—Samuel Smith

“To secure the blessings of liberty, we must secure the blessings of learning.”

—Mary Futrell

“Liberty cannot be preserved without a general knowledge among the people.”

—John Adams

“It is universally admitted that a well-instructed people alone can be permanently a free people.”

—James Madison

“Education is the key to unlock the golden door of freedom.”

—George Washington Carver

“Knowledge is power,
Knowledge is safety,
Knowledge is happiness.”

—Thomas Jefferson

“Knowledge is the only fountain both of the love and principles of human liberty.”

—Daniel Webster

“The diffusion of knowledge is the only guardian of true liberty.”

—James Madison

“It is only when the people become ignorant and corrupt, when they degenerate into a populace, that they are incapable of exercising their sovereignty. Let us, by all wise and constitutional measures, promote intelligence among the people, as the best means of preserving our liberties.”

—James Monroe

“The colonists must have been astonished beyond

measure with the development and implementation of the Declaration of Independence, Constitution, and other supporting documents. To them it must have seemed like a miracle, and it was. America must recapture that awe and wonder.”

—Matthew D. Hutcheson

“Knowledge—that is, education in its true sense—is our best protection against unreasoning prejudice and panic-making fear, whether engendered by special interest . . . or panic-stricken leaders.”

—Franklin D. Roosevelt



“Liberty without learning is always in peril, and learning without liberty is always in vain.”

—John F. Kennedy

“Ignorance is the womb of monsters.”

—Henry Ward Beecher

“Power in defense of freedom is greater than power in behalf of tyranny and oppression.”

—Malcolm X

“The battles that count aren’t the ones for gold medals. The struggles within yourself—the invisible inevitable battles inside all of us—that’s where it’s at.”

—Jesse Owens

“[America] will remain the land of the free only so long as it is the home of the brave.”

—Elmer Davis

“Not for the flag of any land because myself was born there will I give up my life. But I will love that land where man is free, and that will I defend.”

—Edna St. Vincent Millay

“If all Americans want is security, they can go to prison. They’ll have enough to eat, a bed and a roof over their heads. But if an American wants to preserve his dignity and his equality as a human being, he must not bow his neck to any dictatorial government.”

—Dwight D. Eisenhower

“If you want to enjoy the privilege of American citizenship, other Americans expect you to understand and obey two self-existing, self-evident, universal laws. The first is to ‘do all you have agreed to do.’ Keep your word. Keep your promises. Don’t break your contracts, etc.

“The second is ‘do not encroach on the person or property of another individual.’ As Americans, we implicitly agree to the second. If we do all we have agreed to do, then we by definition should not encroach on others. ‘Encroachment’ can mean anything from talking or laughing too loud, thereby interfering with other conversations happening around us, drinking, driving, and crashing into another person’s vehicle, all the way on the other spectrum of murder. ‘Encroachment’ includes anything that interferes with another person’s life, liberty, or the pursuit of happiness. It does not include being ‘offended’ because another

person pursues his or her happiness differently than you do. Excluding pettiness, encroachment takes many forms and it is neither welcome nor accepted in the American way. If everyone in American society would obey those two simple laws that are capacitated to be followable by virtually everyone, there would be peace and harmony in homes and in public.”

—Matthew D. Hutcheson



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

—Nathan Hale

“I know some of you are asking, ‘How long will it take?’ I come to say to you this afternoon, however

difficult the moment, however frustrating the hour, it will not be long, because truth crushed to earth will rise again. How long? Not long, because no lie can live forever. How long? Not long, because you shall reap what you sow. How long? Not long, because the arc of the moral universe is long, but it bends toward justice.”

—Martin Luther King, Jr.

“These are the days for strong men to courageously expose wrong.”

—Adam Clayton Powell, Jr.

“The mind of a bigot is like the pupil of the eye; the more light you pour upon it, the more it will contract.”

—Oliver Wendell Holmes, Jr.

“America was not built on fear. America was built on courage, on imagination and an unbeatable determination to do the job at hand.”

—Harry S. Truman

“Change does not roll in on the wheels of inevitability, but comes through continuous struggle. And so we must straighten our back and work for our freedom. A man can't ride you unless your back is bent.”

—Martin Luther King, Jr.

“If America is not great, then what nation is? If America’s citizens are not good, then what nation’s citizens are?”

—Matthew D. Hutcheson

“As Martin Luther King, Jr. so eloquently said, as applied to the nations of the earth and its citizens, ‘Each [Nation] has two selves, and the great burden of [a nation’s] life is to always try to keep that higher self in command. Don’t let the lower self take over.’ If [America’s] ‘higher self’ is good, then America will be great. America’s ‘higher self’ has always been in command; America has always been great.”

—Matthew D. Hutcheson

“Americans spend \$80 billion annually on incarcerating our fellow Americans.”

—Matthew D. Hutcheson

“The evils that society labors under find their origin in prison. Like an infection that spreads from a cut to an entire limb, prison is the source of the infection, inmates are the carriers, and society contracts the illness.”

—Matthew D. Hutcheson

“The government packs inmates in jails and prisons, and later sends them out into the world infected with every

evil imaginable, and society contracts the disease. What is the result? More prisoners.”

—Matthew D. Hutcheson

“Each year America’s justice system as a whole moves 11 million men and women in and out of U.S. jails and prisons.”

—Matthew D. Hutcheson

“The justice system [has] touched almost every American family.”

—Matthew D. Hutcheson



“Hope is your air in prison. Keep breathing it in.”

—Matthew D. Hutcheson

“An estimated 70 million Americans, nearly 1 in 3 adults, have some type of criminal records causing harmful lingering stigmas and restrictions, harming employment prospects, voting rights, education, housing, and public benefits.”

—Matthew D. Hutcheson

“Our sentences are too long, our sentences too severe, our sentences too harsh . . . there is no compassion in the system. There is no mercy in the system.”

—Matthew D. Hutcheson quoting
U.S. Supreme Court Justice Anthony M. Kennedy

“Socialism is communism’s little brother.”

—Matthew D. Hutcheson

“Communism first excites, then confuses, then destroys.”

—Matthew D. Hutcheson

“Capitalism is naturally occurring.”

—Matthew D. Hutcheson

“Just because few men become great does not mean most men were incapable of becoming so.”

—Matthew D. Hutcheson

“Only when there are things a man will not do is he capable of doing great things.”

—Matthew D. Hutcheson quoting Mencius

“Great thinking leaders bring about change through benevolence.”

—Matthew D. Hutcheson

“Let not the actions or words of others determine your direction. With YOUR mind and heart as YOUR source, resolutely find and chart YOUR course.”

—Matthew D. Hutcheson

“Sustained and persistent courage is possible only by being morally in the right.”

—Matthew D. Hutcheson

“Perhaps I’m a little like Marcus Aurelius . . . ‘Choose not to be harmed—and you won’t feel harmed. Don’t feel harmed—and you haven’t been.’”

—Matthew D. Hutcheson

May 23, 2020 response to question

“What makes life fair is that it is unfair to everyone. Relish in it.”

—Matthew D. Hutcheson

“Want to know who you really are? Choose what is right in the moment you desperately want something that is wrong.”

—Matthew D. Hutcheson

“Imagine being in solitary confinement for five freezing cold months with only a half-sized, decades old, thread-worn sheet for warmth. Constant wind drafts and loud echoes against cement. No phone calls, no earthly comfort, and triumphing over it.”

—Matthew D. Hutcheson



“Waste no more time arguing about what a good man should be. Be one.”

—Marcus Aurelius

“Some men talk about what they should do. Great men do what they should do.”

—Matthew D. Hutcheson

“Leaders must strengthen the state politically, economically and morally. Moral leadership is the more important of the three.”

—Matthew D. Hutcheson

“Don’t reprove. Teach.”

—Matthew D. Hutcheson

“Go out of your way to do what needs to be done. You know.”

—Matthew D. Hutcheson

“When one feels vulnerable, he resists. When one resists, he creates conflict. The fear is of being persuaded to see or believe something we resist. This is irrational. The fear is irrational because listening does not require agreement. Listening is for understanding. Why are we so afraid to listen? Listening, at first, makes one feel vulnerable to persuasion. When one refuses to listen, he automatically refuses to understand.”

—Matthew D. Hutcheson

“Fear begets anger. Anger begets hate. Hate begets suffering.”

—Matthew D. Hutcheson

Quoting the Aikido Center of Los Angeles

“Conflict is not about our differences. It is about a fear of our differences.”

—Matthew D. Hutcheson

“This is what Jesus meant when He said, ‘Resist not evil.’ One may think ‘the other side’ is evil, so he resists. This is irrational. Resist the urge to resist.”

—Matthew D. Hutcheson

“Listening to understand, even to those he thinks are ‘evil,’ is not losing ground. It is gaining it. Do not fear being influenced or persuaded by those you do not respect. You are listening to understand, not necessarily agreeing. You may not respect them, but if you understand them, they will respect YOU. If they respect you, the war will end. Peace is possible, not through ‘peace talks’ but through ‘peace listening.’”

—Matthew D. Hutcheson

“Try listening to understand. Prepare to be amazed.”

—Matthew D. Hutcheson

“Be silent for the most part, or, if you speak, say only what is necessary and in a few words. Talk, but rarely, if occasion calls you, but do not talk of ordinary things; of gladiators, or horse races, or athletes, or of meats or drinks. These are topics that arise everywhere.”

—Epictetus

“If it is true that history repeats itself, then it is a plausible hypothesis that some (or perhaps all) of the historical scenarios will occur again in our immediate or long-term future.”

—Matthew D. Hutcheson



“I stared fear down and what did I see? Terror in its eyes. Fear was afraid of me.”

—Matthew D. Hutcheson

“Capitalism: You own your capital and control your life.
Socialism: The state controls your capital and your life.
Communism: The state OWNS you and all capital.”

—Matthew D. Hutcheson

“Hard times create strong men. Strong men create good times. Good times create weak men. Weak men create hard times.”

—G. Michael Hopf

“The America of today, if truth be told, is in no worse shape than she was ten, twenty, or even one hundred years ago. She is stronger and actually improving. Here is why:

“We nearly lost the Revolutionary War on at least two separate occasions were it not for rogue winter storms that wrecked the Redcoats’ visibility in one instance and drove back their boats and warships in another. The Civil War was also nearly lost but for the Confederacy having misplaced its battle plans and strategic documents in an abandoned tent, later to be

found by a Union scout.

“These events are not luck. They are caused by a Being, more intelligent than, and superior to, us. We then conclude that this Supremely Intelligent and Benevolent Being wants America to exist and go on existing.

“It might surprise most readers to know that America’s destiny has been absolutely littered by an almost bizarre series of impossibly close calls, extending far beyond those of our Revolutionary and Civil Wars. Further examples include the United States’ narrowly winning the race against Germany to construct World War II’s first atomic bomb—and in the 11th hour to break the enigma code.

“It is not the point of this short paper to showcase America’s propensity for running a tight race—although she has done just that. The point here is to highlight America’s iron-clad perseverance, which when considered in its proper historical context, has been absolutely miraculous.

“So, what does history have to say, overall, about America? Is she good? Is she bad? Does Manifest Destiny actually exist, or was it all just a bit of excessive

exuberance coupled with the coincidences and circumstances of the day? If we could pick just one universal trait to define our nation, what might that trait be? Although this last question is a tough one, to be sure, our Nation has existed for long enough for us to have a good look at her pedigree—and she is, by all accounts, unique.

“History has shown us, time and time again, that America’s people are a diverse and complicated bunch. We are a multi-talented tapestry of enormous untapped potential—quietly surging, nearly glowing—as we bend and sway against the political and economic wind gusts of the day.

“It is precisely these qualities, a sense of unpredictability tempered with hope, that has somehow been infused into our Constitution—and is embodied there—stamping its manifest presence onto our destiny. Thus ordained, America has led us over, or through, almost every imaginable obstacle, surviving both reformation and greed, revolution and war—and as always, we will persist, we will adapt, we will prevail. America always will. It is the American Hypothesis.”

—Matthew D. Hutcheson

PART VII

True American

TRUE AMERICAN

Chapter 31

“Grand Juries, Wake Up!”



The following is an excerpt from True American, an upcoming book by Matthew D. Hutcheson.

The “grand jury” originated in fourteenth-century England. King Edward the Third empaneled twenty-four men to investigate an allegation against one of his subjects. Due to some French influence, the source and extent of which is not fully understood, the English grand jury was given the French name “le grande inquest,” which means “a large inquiry.”

Grand juries have existed from 1368 AD until today.¹

1 “Grand Jury,” Black’s Law Dictionary, 11th ed., pg. 843.

Today, a grand jury usually consists of thirteen to twenty-three citizens who have been empaneled for at least one month, but possibly up to a year. On rare occasions, a grand jury may be empaneled for more than a year. The grand jury's job is to determine if *probable cause* exists to return a "true bill of indictment" against the accused.

Once indicted, the accused is arrested.

"Probable cause" means that reasonable ground exists to *suspect* a person has committed a crime—that is all.

Therein lies the problem.

The mere accusation by the mighty United States of America is enough to cause a grand juror to *suspect* whatever the accuser, the government, wants him to suspect. Sadly, it goes further. An indictment is no different in the minds of an average citizen from a conviction. The resultant public condemnation is the same.

Because grand juries are empaneled "ex parte," Latin for "without the other party present," the government can engage in unchallenged persuasive theater which may be quite entertaining and intriguing. "The accused must

be guilty,” thinks the juror. “Why else would the government go to such lengths?” his or her thoughts continue.

Oh, there are *other* reasons the government accuses someone . . . *many other reasons*.

Too often, there are dishonorable reasons.

In the American system of criminal law, two parties in opposition to each other are brought before the court. Each views the other as an “adversary,”² which is more aptly described as an “enemy.”

The enemies are pitted against each other in the public arena.

One accuses the other, which is the government. The other is the accused, which is a citizen.

The two parties then engage in legal war in which facts and evidence destroy or protect the other.

Evidence and facts are presented to the grand jury, accurately or not, by the prosecution in the absence of

2 “Adversary System,” “Accusational System,” “Accusatory Procedure,” Black’s Law Dictionary, 11th ed., pg. 66.

the accused to destroy him or her—pure and simple. The prosecution always succeeds because the grand jury does not understand its true responsibility to protect the innocent.

In a grand jury setting, only the government, the accuser, appears before the panel. The accused, more often than not, does not even know a grand jury has been convened. Thus, the “war” is unfair from the start.

What starts unfair, ends unfair.

Preeminent in the American system of law is the doctrine of “innocent until proven guilty.” If a grand jury views the proceedings correctly, as intended under our system of law, it will view and treat the accused as innocent. As innocent, it should view the accused as a victim of the government. If the accused is innocent, then the government must be viewed as a false accuser.

At least this is how it is *supposed* to work.

Logically deduced, and properly inferred, the grand jury’s first and foremost obligation is to prevent a false accusation from becoming an indictment. It must protect its fellow citizen from the overreach and excessive use of

power by the federal government. The grand jury should be a firewall between the innocent and the government's false and/or overzealous prosecutions.

Instead, what has occurred over time is that the grand jury has become the pliable instrument of the government to obtain what it wants instead of being the protector of the innocent, as by necessity it should be.

Thus, infection from decades of government manipulation has corrupted the grand jury process. It has happened so subtly that citizens scarcely understand their loyalty should first be to the innocent, not to the government.

“Do unto others what you would have them do unto you.”

It is all lost to the “justice” system.

The grand jury's suspicion and resistance should be directed at the government, not at the fellow citizen, who must be viewed as innocent and a victim of a false accusation.

Fear, intimidation, awe, acquiescence, or a misplaced

duty of loyalty towards the government instead of the innocent has overtaken the grand jury. When life's obligations, pressures, and distractions of the modern world in which we now live are added to the mix, our fellow citizens empaneled as a grand jury are failing us too often—actually, most of the time.

“I need to go back to work.”

“I need to pick up my child from school.”

“I need to check my social media.”

“I need to go to the gym.”

“Do we have milk? Don't forget to stop at the grocery store.”

Yes, life.

But what hangs in the balance is another person's liberty, good name, and even, perhaps, his or her actual life.

Being “American” carries with it great responsibilities toward our fellow citizens, which must not be

casualized. Yes, those responsibilities are inconvenient most of the time. Sometimes it is a matter of life or death. Other times it requires the exercise of great courage to tell an accuser, “NO!”

But today’s grand juries do not push back as they should. They lack courage and integrity. Why would they need any? An *ex parte* proceeding does not have crying wives and children to consider. The devastation from a destroyed reputation has not yet occurred, and they will not see or experience it when it does. “Who cares if the evidence could actually mean something else? It makes sense to us as presented and I do not care to inquire further,” they rationalize. Only the government’s words and theater inform the decision.

Entertainment and intrigue soon turn to boredom and impatience.

Then comes the indictment.

Followed by the destruction of innocent lives.

How else can a statistically impossible 99% indictment rate and 98% conviction rate be explained? Not even brilliant scientists, medical doctors, Congress,

accountants, or physicists are that accurate.

There is nothing new about the high conviction rate in federal courts, although it has been consistently rising since 1973. The conviction rate has been above 99% since 2003, above 98% since 1995, above 97% since 1985, above 96% since 1982, above 95% since 1975, and above 94% every year since 1955.³

How else can one explain how 70 million American adults, one in three, somehow end up with a criminal record?⁴

Something is very, very wrong.

Few Americans are actually evil. Yet, grand juries have allowed the government to define one in three American adults as such.

Grand juries, wake up!

3 Justicedenied.org, Issue 67, Spring 2017, pg. 12.

4 70 Million Americans with Criminal Records. White House Council of Economic Advisers, Economic Perspectives on Incarceration and the Criminal Justice System, pg. 23 (2016).

