

CHAPTER 8

Securing the Republic, 1790–1815

44. Benjamin F. Bache, A Defense of the French Revolution (1792–1793)

Source: The General Advertiser (Philadelphia), December 12, 1792, January 25, 1793

The French Revolution reverberated strongly in the United States. From its outbreak in 1789, Americans eagerly followed the course of events. Initially, nearly all Americans hailed the overthrow of the monarchy as a fulfillment of the ideals of their own revolution. But as France descended into bloodshed and war broke out between Great Britain and France, Federalists condemned the Revolution and Republicans remained sympathetic while criticizing its excesses. In these editorials for the Philadelphia newspaper he edited, Benjamin Franklin Bache, a grandson of Benjamin Franklin and a leading Republican, defended the actions of the French revolutionaries, insisting that a long-established system of “despotism” could not be overthrown without turmoil. The opposition to change, he insisted, was more deeply entrenched in France than it had been in America, and hence the struggle for liberty had to be more extreme.

Later in the 1790s, Bache was arrested under the Sedition Act, which made it a crime to criticize the policies of President John Adams. His experience illustrates how early American politics was profoundly influenced by events elsewhere in the Atlantic world.

IN ADVERTING TO the present disastrous situation of France, many, perhaps may be inclined to reprobate that revolution which has produced effects so horrible. But if we survey the effects with the eye of cool deliberation, we shall find that though they certainly emanated from the revolution, yet that our reprobation ought to be turned into another channel. The change which took place in the system of government, emancipated twenty-four millions of the human species.—Prima facie, therefore, the most cautious reasoning must allow it to be an event of infinite advantage to the world.

But though it was effected with the consent and support of nine parts out of ten, yet the tenth part viewed it in a different light. A long series of years had transmitted to them hereditary rights & privileges which placed them above the great body of the nation. The King exercised a despotic power without restraint. The nobles described around them a circle equally tyrannical, though of extent less ample. To those who know how dear the possession of power to the human mind, it will not appear strange that such persons should view the revolution with the eye of anger, in as much as it wrested from them those exclusive rights which had descended to them covered with the reverend rust of antiquity; neither will it be a matter of wonder that they should attempt to impede the progress of a system to them so distasteful. . . . Let us recollect, that though much blood may be shed ere Liberty be firmly established; yet that when it shall be established the effusion will cease. A system of Despotism, however, cannot be supported without blood, and we have no reason to believe that as long as it continues, the sanguinary torrent will ever cease. Until we know the real cause of those ferocious acts, which no honest man can approve nor no honest man contemplate without horror, it is treason against a good cause to attribute them to the friends of the Revolution. . . .

There is that difference between the French and American Revolutions, that the latter was not opposed by cunning priests, nor cruel aristocrats determined to overthrow every principle of honesty and humanity. . . . A royal puppet on this spot, did not dance on the wire of a band of courtiers; the most despicable and abandoned wretches

that ever disgraced mankind. The focus of both despotism and nobility was far from this land of liberty, and its glorious adherents could not be infected with the pernicious breath of mad royalty and impudent aristocracy. The popular cause was opposed openly, sword in hand, and victoriously fought by the friends to the rights of men; had the French republicans met with such opponents, they had not done those excesses, the king, the nobles and clergy have roused them to by the most perfidious contrivances. A king did not forswear himself in America, nor had the American people more than one [Benedict] Arnold; their tempers were soured neither by misery nor by a complicated system of treachery, framed coolly and pursued with the greatest obstinacy. The American people were not loaded with enormous taxes that had reduced millions of their fellow citizens to the utmost misery to maintain haughty plunderers in sloth and profligacy. All this odds must be reckoned by impartial men; to explain the difference insidiously delineated between the two revolutions, by some desperate royalty, or a narrow minded plan.

Questions

1. Why does Bache believe that Americans should support the French Revolution despite the bloodshed taking place in France?
2. What does he see as the similarities and differences between the American and French Revolutions?

45. Address of the Democratic-Republican Society of Pennsylvania (1794)

Source: Democratic-Republican Society of Pennsylvania: excerpt from Minutes of The Democratic Society of Pennsylvania, December 18, 1794. The Historical Society of Pennsylvania (HSP), Collection # Am. 315/3150. Reprinted with permission.

Another example of the spread of public involvement in politics during the 1790s was the emergence in 1793 and 1794 of the Democratic-Republican societies. The societies harshly criticized the policies of George Washington's administration, which they claimed were planting the seeds of aristocracy in the United States.

Federalists saw the societies as an example of how American freedom was getting out of hand. The government, not "self-created societies," declared the president, was the authentic voice of the American people. They also accused the societies of helping to foment the Whiskey Rebellion of 1794, in which farmers in western Pennsylvania resisted paying a new federal tax on distilled liquor. Forced to justify their existence, the societies developed a defense of the right of the people to debate political issues and organize to affect public policy. As a statement adopted by the Democratic-Republican Society of Pennsylvania insisted, "freedom of opinion" was the "bulwark of liberty," a natural right that no government could restrict.

THE DEMOCRATIC SOCIETY of Pennsylvania, established in Philadelphia, to their Fellow Citizens throughout the United States.

FELLOW CITIZENS,

The principles and proceedings of our Association have lately been caluminated. We should think ourselves unworthy to be ranked as Freemen, if awed by the name of any man, however he may command the public gratitude for past services, we could suffer in silence so sacred a right, so important a principle, as the freedom of opinion to be infringed, by attack on Societies which stand on that constitutional basis.

We shall not imitate our opponents, by resorting to declamation and abuse, instead of calm reasoning, and substituting assertion for proof. They have termed us anarchists; they have accused us of fomenting the unfortunate troubles in the western counties of this State:—yet not a single fact have they been able to adduce in support of the charge,—They have accused us of aiming at the overthrow of

the Constitution; and this also rests upon their bare assertion. Neither shall we recriminate; though we might with at least as much plausibility assert, that endeavours to crush the freedom of opinion and of speech, denote liberticide intentions. But we shall content ourselves with a bare examination of the question, which has agitated the public mind; and refute the calumnies heaped on our Institution.

Freedom of thought, and a free communication of opinions by speech or through the medium of the press, are the safeguards of our Liberties. Apathy as to public concerns, too frequent even in Republics, is the reason for usurpation: by the communication or collision of sentiments, knowledge is increased, and truth prevails.

By the freedom of opinion, cannot be meant the right of thinking merely; for of this right the greatest Tyrant cannot deprive his meanest slave; but, it is freedom in the communication of sentiments, [by] speech or through the press. This liberty is an imprescriptable right, independent of any Constitution or social compact: it is as complete a right as that which any man has to the enjoyment of his life. These principles are eternal—they are recognized by our Constitution; and that nation is already enslaved that does not acknowledge their truth.

In the expression of sentiments, speech is the natural organ—the press an artificial one and though the latter, from the services it has rendered, has obtained the just appellation of Bulwark of Liberty; it would not be difficult to show that the former should be more prized because more secure from usurpation.

If freedom of opinion, in the sense we understand it, is the right of every Citizen, by what mode of reasoning can that right be denied to an assemblage of Citizens? A conviction that the exercise of this right collectively could not be questioned, led to the formation of our institution; and in the conduct the Society have held since their first establishment, they trust, no instance can be adduced in which they have overstepped the just bounds of the right, of which they claim the enjoyment. . . .

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The Society are free to declare that they never were more strongly impressed with a sentiment of the importance of associations, on the principles which they hold, than at the present time. The germ of an odious Aristocracy is planted among us—it has taken root,—and has indeed already produced fruit worthy of the parent stock. If it be imprudent to eradicate this baneful exotic, let us at least unite in checking its growth. Let us remain firm in attachment to principles, and with a jealous eye guard our rights against the least infringement. The enlightened state of the public mind in this country, frees us, we trust, of all apprehension from bold and open usurpation; but the gradual approaches of artful ambition, are the source of great danger. Let us especially guard, with firmness, the outposts of our Liberties: and, if we wish to baffle the efforts of the enemies of freedom, whatever garb they may assume, let us be particularly watchful to preserve inviolate the freedom of opinion, assured that it is the most effectual weapon for the protection of our liberty.

Resolved, That the said Address be signed by the President and attested by the Acting Secretary: and that it be published.

Questions

1. How do the members of the Democratic-Republican Society defend their right to form a society that comments on public affairs?
2. What do they mean by writing that “the germ of an odious Aristocracy” has been planted in the United States?

46. Judith Sargent Murray, “On the Equality of the Sexes” (1790)

Source: Judith Sargent Murray, “On the Equality of the Sexes,” *Massachusetts Magazine*, Vol. 2 (March 1790), pp. 132–35.

The expansion of the public sphere during the era of the Revolution offered women an opportunity to take part in political discussions, read newspapers, and hear orations even though outside of New Jersey they could not vote. Judith Sargent Murray, one of the era's most accomplished American women, wrote plays, novels, and poetry. She also wrote essays on public issues for the *Massachusetts Magazine* and other journals under the pen name "The Gleaner."

Although Murray could not attend college because of her sex, she studied alongside her brother with a tutor preparing the young man for admission to Harvard. In her essay "On the Equality of the Sexes," written in 1779 and published in 1790, Murray insisted that women had as much right as men to exercise all their talents and should be allowed equal educational opportunities to enable them to do so. Murray forthrightly demanded "equality" for women, and attacked the common idea that women's happiness rested on devoting themselves to their duties within the family.

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IS IT UPON mature consideration we adopt the idea, that nature is thus partial in her distributions? Is it indeed a fact, that she hath yielded to one half of the human species so unquestionable a mental superiority? I know that to both sexes elevated understandings, and the reverse, are common. But, suffer me to ask, in what the minds of females are so notoriously deficient, or unequal. May not the intellectual powers be ranged under these four heads—imagination, reason, memory and judgment. The province of imagination hath long since been surrendered up to us, and we have been crowned undoubted sovereigns of the regions of fancy. Invention is perhaps the most arduous effort of the mind; this branch of imagination hath been particularly ceded to us, and we have been time out of mind invested with that creative faculty. Observe the variety of fashions (here I bar the contemptuous smile) which distinguish and adorn the female world; how continually are they changing, insomuch that they almost render the wise man's assertion problematical, and we are ready to say, *there is something new under the sun*. Now what a

playfulness, what an exuberance of fancy, what strength of inventive imagination, doth this continual variation discover?

Again, it hath been observed, that if the turpitude of the conduct of our sex, hath been ever so enormous, so extremely ready are we, that the very first thought presents us with an apology, so plausible, as to produce our actions even in an amiable light. Another instance of our creative powers, is our talent for slander; how ingenious are we at inventive scandal? what a formidable story can we in a moment fabricate merely from the force of a prolific imagination? how many reputations, in the fertile brain of a female, have been utterly despoiled? how industrious are we at improving a hint? suspicion how easily do we convert into conviction, and conviction, embellished by the power of eloquence, stalks abroad to the surprise and confusion of unsuspecting innocence. Perhaps it will be asked if I furnish these facts as instances of excellency in our sex. Certainly not; but as proofs of a creative faculty, of a lively imagination. Assuredly great activity of mind is thereby discovered, and was this activity properly directed, what beneficial effects would follow. Is the needle and kitchen sufficient to employ the operations of a soul thus organized? I should conceive not. Nay, it is a truth that those very departments leave the intelligent principle vacant, and at liberty for speculation.

Are we deficient in reason? we can only reason from what we know, and if an opportunity of acquiring knowledge hath been denied us, the inferiority of our sex cannot fairly be deduced from thence. Memory, I believe, will be allowed us in common, since every one's experience must testify, that a loquacious old woman is as frequently met with, as a communicative old man; their subjects are alike drawn from the fund of other times, and the transactions of their youth, or of maturer life, entertain, or perhaps fatigue you, in the evening of their lives. "But our judgment is not so strong—we do not distinguish so well."—Yet it may be questioned, from what doth this superiority, in this determining faculty of the soul, proceed. May we not trace its source in the difference of education, and continued advantages?

Will it be said that the judgment of a male of two years old, is more sage than that of a female's of the same age? I believe the reverse is generally observed to be true. But from that period what partiality! how is the one exalted, and the other depressed, by the contrary modes of education which are adopted! the one is taught to aspire, and the other is early confined and limited. As their years increase, the sister must be wholly domesticated, while the brother is led by the hand through all the flowery paths of science. Grant that their minds are by nature equal, yet who shall wonder at the *apparent* superiority, if indeed custom becomes *second nature*; nay if it taketh place of nature, and that it doth the experience of each day will evince. At length arrived at womanhood, the uncultivated fair one feels a void, which the employments allotted her are by no means capable of filling. What can she do? to books she may not apply; or if she doth, *to those only of the novel kind*, lest she merit the appellation of a *learned lady*; and what ideas have been affixed to this term, the observation of many can testify. Fashion, scandal, and sometimes what is still more reprehensible, are then called in to her relief; and who can say to what lengths the liberties she takes may proceed. Meantime she herself is most unhappy; she feels the want of a cultivated mind. Is she single, she in vain seeks to fill up time from sexual employments or amusements. Is she united to a person whose soul nature made equal to her own, education hath set him so far above her, that in those entertainments which are productive of such rational felicity, she is not qualified to accompany him. She experiences a mortifying consciousness of inferiority, which embitters every enjoyment. Doth the person to whom her adverse fate hath consigned her, possess a mind incapable of improvement, she is equally wretched, in being so closely connected with an individual whom she cannot but despise. Now, was she permitted the same instructors as her brother, (with an eye however to their particular departments) for the employment of a rational mind an ample field would be opened. . . .

Will it be urged that those acquirements would supersede our domestic duties. I answer that every requisite in female economy is

easily attained; and, with truth I can add, that when once attained, they require no further *mental attention*. Nay, while we are pursuing the needle, or the superintendency of the family, I repeat, that our minds are at full liberty for reflection; that imagination may exert itself in full vigor; and that if a just foundation is early laid, our ideas will then be worthy of rational beings. If we were industrious we might easily find time to arrange them upon paper, or should avocations press too hard for such an indulgence, the hours allotted for conversation would at least become more refined and rational. Should it still be vociferated, "Your domestic employments are sufficient"—I would calmly ask, is it reasonable, that a candidate for immortality, for the joys of heaven, an intelligent being, who is to spend an eternity in contemplating the works of Deity, should at present be so degraded, as to be allowed no other ideas, than those which are suggested by the mechanism of a pudding, or the sewing the seams of a garment? Pity that all such censurers of female improvement do not go one step further, and deny their future existence; to be consistent they surely ought.

Yes, ye lordly, ye haughty sex, our souls are by nature *equal* to yours; the same breath of God animates, enlivens, and invigorates us; and that we are not fallen lower than yourselves, let those witness who have greatly towered above the various discouragements by which they have been so heavily oppressed. . . . Were we to grant that animal strength proved any thing, taking into consideration the accustomed impartiality of nature, we should be induced to imagine, that she had invested the female mind with superior strength as an equivalent for the bodily powers of man. But waving this however palpable advantage, for *equality only*, we wish to contend.

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Questions

1. Why does Murray refer to the "variety of fashions" among women as an argument for their intellectual capacity?

2. How does she answer the charge that offering educational opportunities to women will lead to neglect of their "domestic duties"?

47. George Washington, Farewell Address (1796)

Source: James D. Richardson, ed., A Compilation of the Messages and Papers of the Presidents (10 vols.: Washington, D.C., 1896-1899), Vol. 1, pp. 223-24.

In 1796, after two terms in office, George Washington announced his intention to retire from public life, in part to establish the precedent that the presidency is not a life office. His Farewell Address (mostly drafted by Alexander Hamilton but carefully reviewed by Washington and published in the newspapers rather than delivered orally), became one of the most often-quoted public pronouncements in American history.

Washington called on Americans to overcome party and regional divisions and unite in "the name of American." He warned against the party spirit, insisting that political parties created ill will and substituted the interests of a portion of the people for the good of the whole. And he advised his countrymen to steer clear of European power politics by avoiding permanent alliances with any other country. While Washington's warning against the formation of political parties would go unheeded, his principle that, as much as possible, the United States should avoid "political connection" with foreign powers would shape American foreign policy for the next century.

THE PERIOD FOR a new election of a citizen to administer the executive government of the United States being not far distant, and the time actually arrived when your thoughts must be employed in designating the person who is to be clothed with that important trust, it appears to me proper, especially as it may conduce to a more distinct expression of the public voice, that I should now apprise

you of the resolution I have formed to decline being considered among the number of those out of whom a choice is to be made . . .

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The unity of government which constitutes you one people is also now dear to you. It is justly so, for it is a main pillar in the edifice of your real independence, the support of your tranquility at home, your peace abroad, of your safety, of your prosperity, of that very liberty which you so highly prize. But as it is easy to foresee that from different causes and from different quarters much pains will be taken, many artifices employed, to weaken in your minds the conviction of this truth, as this is the point in your political fortress against which the batteries of internal and external enemies will be most constantly and actively (though often covertly and insidiously) directed, it is of infinite moment that you should properly estimate the immense value of your national union to your collective and individual happiness; that you should cherish a cordial, habitual, and immovable attachment to it; accustoming yourselves to think and speak of it as of the palladium of your political safety and prosperity; watching for its preservation with jealous anxiety; discountenancing whatever may suggest even a suspicion that it can in any event be abandoned, and indignantly frowning upon the first dawning of every attempt to alienate any portion of our country from the rest or to enfeeble the sacred ties which now link together the various parts.

For this you have every inducement of sympathy and interest. Citizens by birth or choice of a common country, that country has a right to concentrate your affections. The name of American, which belongs to you in your national capacity, must always exalt the just pride of patriotism more than any appellation derived from local discriminations. With slight shades of difference, you have the same religion, manners, habits, and political principles. You have in a common cause fought and triumphed together. The independence and liberty you possess are the work of joint councils and joint efforts, of common dangers, sufferings, and successes. . . .

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In contemplating the causes which may disturb our union it occurs as matter of serious concern that any ground should have been furnished for characterizing parties by *geographical* discriminations—*Northern* and *Southern*, *Atlantic* and *Western*—whence designing men may endeavor to excite a belief that there is a real difference of local interests and views. One of the expedients of party to acquire influence within particular districts is to misrepresent the opinions and aims of other districts. You can not shield yourselves too much against the jealousies and heartburnings which spring from these misrepresentations; they tend to render alien to each other those who ought to be bound together by fraternal affection . . .

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To the efficacy and permanency of your union a government for the whole is indispensable. No alliances, however strict, between the parts can be an adequate substitute. They must inevitably experience the infractions and interruptions which all alliances in all times have experienced. Sensible of this momentous truth, you have improved upon your first essay by the adoption of a Constitution of government better calculated than your former for an intimate union and for the efficacious management of your common concerns. This government, the offspring of our own choice, uninfluenced and unawed, adopted upon full investigation and mature deliberation, completely free in its principles, in the distribution of its powers, uniting security with energy, and containing within itself a provision for its own amendment, has a just claim to your confidence and your support. Respect for its authority, compliance with its laws, acquiescence in its measures, are duties enjoined by the fundamental maxims of true liberty. The basis of our political systems is the right of the people to make and to alter their constitutions of government. But the constitution which at any time exists till changed by an explicit and authentic act of the whole people is sacredly obligatory upon all. The very idea of the power and the right of the people to establish government presupposes the duty of every individual to obey the established government . . .

Toward the preservation of your government and the permanency of your present happy state, it is requisite not only that you steadily discountenance irregular oppositions to its acknowledged authority, but also that you resist with care the spirit of innovation upon its principles, however specious the pretexts. One method of assault may be to effect in the forms of the Constitution alterations which will impair the energy of the system, and thus to undermine what can not be directly overthrown. In all the changes to which you may be invited remember that time and habit are at least as necessary to fix the true character of governments as of other human institutions; that experience is the surest standard by which to test the real tendency of the existing constitution of a country; that facility in changes upon the credit of mere hypothesis and opinion exposes to perpetual change, from the endless variety of hypothesis and opinion; and remember especially that for the efficient management of your common interests in a country so extensive as ours a government of as much vigor as is consistent with the perfect security of liberty is indispensable . . .

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I have already intimated to you the danger of parties in the state, with particular reference to the founding of them on geographical discriminations. Let me now take a more comprehensive view, and warn you in the most solemn manner against the baneful effects of the spirit of party generally.

This spirit, unfortunately, is inseparable from our nature, having its root in the strongest passions of the human mind. It exists under different shapes in all governments, more or less stifled, controlled, or repressed; but in those of the popular form it is seen in its greatest rankness and is truly their worst enemy . . .

It serves always to distract the public councils and enfeeble the public administration. It agitates the community with illfounded jealousies and false alarms; kindles the animosity of one part against another; foment occasionally riot and insurrection. It opens the door to foreign influence and corruption, which find a facilitated access to the government itself through the channels of party passion. Thus

the policy and the will of one country are subjected to the policy and will of another . . .

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Against the insidious wiles of foreign influence (I conjure you to believe me, fellow-citizens) the jealousy of a free people ought to be *constantly* awake, since history and experience prove that foreign influence is one of the most baneful foes of republican government. But that jealousy, to be useful, must be impartial, else it becomes the instrument of the very influence to be avoided, instead of a defense against it. Excessive partiality for one foreign nation and excessive dislike of another cause those whom that actuate to see danger only on one side, and serve to veil and even second the arts of influence on the other. Real patriots who may resist the intrigues of the favorite are liable to become suspected and odious, while its tools and dupes usurp the applause and confidence of the people to surrender their interests.

The great rule of conduct for us in regard to foreign nations is, in extending our commercial relations to have with them as little *political* connection as possible. So far as we have already formed engagements let them be fulfilled with perfect good faith. Here let us stop.

Europe has a set of primary interests which to us have none or a very remote relation. Hence she must be engaged in frequent controversies, the causes of which are essentially foreign to our concerns. Hence, therefore, it must be unwise in us to implicate ourselves to artificial ties in the ordinary vicissitudes of her politics or the ordinary combinations and collisions of her friendships or enmities.

Our detached and distant situation invites and enables us to pursue a different course. If we remain one people, under an efficient government, the period is not far off when we may defy material injury from external annoyance; when we may take such an attitude as will cause the neutrality we may at any time resolve upon to be scrupulously respected; when belligerent nations, under the impossibility of making acquisitions upon us, will not lightly haz-

ard the giving us provocation; when we may choose peace or war, as our interest, guided by justice, shall counsel.

Why forego the advantages of so peculiar a situation? Why quit our own to stand upon foreign ground? Why, by interweaving our destiny with that of any part of Europe, entangle our peace and prosperity in the toils of European ambition, rivalry, interest, humor, or caprice?

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Questions

1. Why does Washington warn Americans against "the spirit of parties"?
2. What European "interests" does Washington have in mind when he warns against forming permanent alliances with any foreign country?

48. George Tucker on Gabriel's Rebellion (1801)

Source: Letter to a Member of the General Assembly of Virginia on the Subject of the Late Conspiracy of the Slaves; With a Proposal for their Colonization (Baltimore, 1801), pp. 5-18.

In 1800, a plot by slaves in Virginia to gain their freedom was organized by a Richmond blacksmith, Gabriel. The plot was soon discovered and the leaders arrested. Twenty-six slaves, including Gabriel, were hanged and dozens more transported out of the state. The conspiracy, commented George Tucker, a member of one of the state's most prominent families, demonstrated that slaves possessed "the love of freedom" as fully as other men. Gabriel's language, he added, reflected "the advance of knowledge" among Virginia's slaves, which would inevitably continue.

Like Thomas Jefferson, James Madison, and many others of his generation, Tucker opposed slavery but could not envision the United States as a

biracial society of free citizens. He proposed that the Virginia legislature adopt a plan to emancipate the slaves and settle them outside of the state, somewhere "on the western side" of the Mississippi River (an area then under the control of Spain). The legislature, however, moved in the opposite direction. It tightened controls over the black population and severely restricted the possibility of masters voluntarily freeing their slaves.

THERE IS OFTEN a progress in human affairs which may indeed be retarded, but which nothing can arrest. Moving on with slow and silent steps, it is marked only by comparing distant periods. The causes which produce it are either so minute as to be invisible, or, if perceived, are too numerous and complicated to be subject to human controul. Of such sort is the advancement of knowledge among the negroes of this country. It is so striking, as to be obvious to a man of the most ordinary observation. Every year adds to the number of those who can read and write; and he who has made any proficiency in letters, becomes a little centre of instruction to others. This increase of knowledge is the principal agent in evolving the spirit we have to fear. The love of freedom, sir, is an inborn sentiment, which the God of nature has planted deep in the heart: long may it be kept under by the arbitrary institutions of society; but, at the first favourable moment, it springs forth, and flourishes with a vigour that defies all check. This celestial spark, which fires the breast of the savage, which glows in that of the philosopher, is not extinguished in the bosom of the slave. It may be buried in the embers; but it still lives; and the breath of knowledge kindles it into flame. Thus we find, sir, there never have been slaves in any country, who have not seized the first favorable opportunity to revolt.

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In our infant country, where population and wealth increase with unexampled rapidity, the progress of liberal knowledge is proportionally great. In this vast march of the mind, the blacks, who are far behind us, may be supposed to advance at a pace equal to our

own; but, sir, the fact is, they are likely to advance much faster. The growth and multiplication of our towns tend a thousand ways to enlighten and inform them. The very nature of our government, which leads us to recur perpetually to the discussion of natural rights, favors speculation and enquiry.

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There is one argument to which I have not even hinted; but which some may think of more weight than any other;—I mean the ease with which they may become the tools of a foreign enemy. Granting that the danger from themselves is slight or remote, this, it must be confessed, depends upon an event that is altogether uncertain. War is sometimes inevitable; no human prudence can guard against an event that may be brought about by the insolence, the injustice, or the caprice of *any* nation. Whenever we are involved in this calamity, if our enemies hold out the lure of freedom, they will have, in every negro, a decided friend. The passage is easy from friends to auxiliaries: little address would be necessary to excite insurrection; to put arms into their hands, and to convert a willing multitude into a compact and disciplined army.

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The following hints I submit to your serious and candid consideration.

That application be made to the United States, to procure from the Spanish government, or to furnish from its own territory, such a tract of country as shall be deemed sufficient for the colony proposed. The consideration of future peace would recommend the western side of the Mississippi. Present convenience and economy would advise a purchase of some part of the Indian country, comprehended within the limits of the state of Georgia.

That this colony be under the protection and immediate government of this state, or the United States, until it contained a number of inhabitants sufficient to manage their own concerns: and that it be exclusively appropriated to the colonization and residence of people of colour.

Questions

1. Why does Tucker think that "progress in human affairs" will inevitably lead slaves to become more discontented?
2. In what ways does Tucker believe that living in Virginia has affected the ideas of the slaves?

49. Tecumseh on Indians and Land (1810)

Source: Samuel G. Drake, The Book of the Indians; or, Biography and History of the Indians of North America (8th ed.: Boston, 1841), Book 5, pp. 121-22.

By 1800, nearly 400,000 American settlers lived west of the Appalachian Mountains. They far outnumbered remaining Indians. Some Indians determined to root out European influences and resist further white encroachment on Indian lands. The most militant were two Shawnee brothers, Tecumseh, a chief who had refused to sign the Treaty of Greenville in 1795, and Tenskwatawa, a religious prophet who called for complete separation from whites, the revival of traditional Indian culture, and resistance to federal policies.

In 1810, Tecumseh met with William Henry Harrison, the territorial governor of Indiana. He predicted war if white incursions on Indian land continued and condemned chiefs who had sold land to the federal government. Indians, he proclaimed, should "unite in claiming a common and equal right in the land, as it was at first." During the War of 1812, Tecumseh was commissioned an officer in the British army. He died at the Battle of the Thames, near Detroit.

. . .

IT IS TRUE I am a Shawanee. My forefathers were warriors. Their son is a warrior. From them I only take my existence; from my tribe

I take nothing. I am the maker of my own fortune; and oh! that I could make that of my red people, and of my country, as great as the conceptions of my mind, when I think of the Spirit that rules the universe. I would not then come to Governor *Harrison*, to ask him to tear the treaty, and to obliterate the landmark; but I would say to him, Sir, you have liberty to return to your own country. The being within, communing with past ages, tells me, that once, nor until lately, there was no white man on this continent. That it then all belonged to red men, children of the same parents, placed on it by the Great Spirit that made them, to keep it, to traverse it, to enjoy its productions, and to fill it with the same race. Once a happy race. Since made miserable by the white people, who are never contented, but always encroaching. The way, and the only way to check and to stop this evil, is, for all the red men to unite in claiming a common and equal right in the land, as it was at first, and should be yet; for it never was divided, but belongs to all, for the use of each. That no part has a right to sell, even to each other, much less to strangers; those who want all, and will not do with less. The white people have no right to take the land from the Indians, because they had it first; it is theirs. They may sell, but all must join. Any sale not made by all is not valid. The late sale is bad. It was made by a part only. Part do not know how to sell. It requires all to make a bargain for all. All red men have equal rights to the unoccupied land. The right of occupancy is as good in one place as in another. There cannot be two occupations in the same place. The first excludes all others. It is not so in hunting or travelling; for there the same ground will serve many, as they may follow each other all day; but the camp is stationary, and that is occupancy. It belongs to the first who sits down on his blanket or skins, which he has thrown upon the ground, and till he leaves it no other has a right.

. . .

Questions

1. How does Tecumseh's speech illustrate differences between Indian and American views of land as private property?
2. What evidence does he offer that whites cannot be trusted by the Indians?

50. Felix Grundy, Battle Cry of the War Hawks (1811)

Source: Annals of Congress, 12th Congress, 1st Session, pp. 425–27 (December 10, 1811).

In the months leading up to the War of 1812, a group of younger congressmen, mostly from the West, called for war with Britain. Known as the War Hawks, this new generation of political leaders had come of age after the winning of independence and were ardent nationalists. Their leaders included Henry Clay of Kentucky, elected Speaker of the House of Representatives in 1810, and John C. Calhoun of South Carolina. The War Hawks spoke passionately of defending the national honor against British insults, but also had more practical goals in mind, notably the annexation of Canada. Their views were expressed in a speech in the House of Representatives by Felix Grundy of Tennessee. To British interference with American shipping, the main concern of the Madison administration, Grundy added the aim of adding Canada (British territory) and Florida (owned by Spain) to the United States, thereby expanding the Union and undermining the remaining power of Indian tribes.

WHAT, MR. SPEAKER, are we now called on to decide? It is, whether we will resist by force the attempt, made by [the British] Government, to subject our maritime rights to the arbitrary and capricious rule of her will; for my part I am not prepared to say that

this country shall submit to have her commerce interdicted or regulated, by any foreign nation. Sir, I prefer war to submission.

Over and above these unjust pretensions of the British Government, for many years past they have been in the practice of impressing our seamen, from merchant vessels; this unjust and lawless invasion of personal liberty, calls loudly for the interposition of this Government. To those better acquainted with the facts in relation to it, I leave it to fill up the picture. My mind is irresistibly drawn to the West. . . .

It cannot be believed by any man who will reflect, that the savage tribes, uninfluenced by other Powers, would think of making war on the United States. They understand too well their own weakness, and our strength. They have already felt the weight of our arms; they know they hold the very soil on which they live as tenants at sufferance. How, then, sir, are we to account for their late conduct? In one way only; some powerful nation must have intrigued with them, and turned their peaceful disposition towards us into hostilities. Great Britain alone has intercourse with those Northern tribes; I therefore infer, that if British gold has not been employed, their baubles and trinkets, and the promise of support and a place of refuge if necessary, have had their effect. . . .

This war, if carried on successfully, will have its advantages. We shall drive the British from our Continent—they will no longer have an opportunity of intriguing with our Indian neighbors, and setting on the ruthless savage to tomahawk our women and children. That nation will lose her Canadian trade, and, by having no resting place in this country, her means of annoying us will be diminished. . . . I am willing to receive the Canadians as adopted brethren; it will have beneficial political effects; it will preserve the equilibrium of the Government. When Louisiana shall be fully peopled, the Northern States will lose their power; they will be at the discretion of others; they can be depressed at pleasure, and then this Union might be endangered—I therefore feel anxious not only to add the Floridas to the South, but the Canadas to the North of this empire. . . .

Questions

1. Why does Grundy think that acquiring Canada will strengthen the American Union?
2. Who does Grundy hold responsible for Tecumseh's uprising (the "late conduct" of the Indian tribes he mentions)?

CHAPTER 9

The Market Revolution, 1800–1840

51. Complaint of a Lowell Factory Worker (1845)

Source: Factory Tracts Number One. Factory Life As It Is (Lowell, 1845).

The early industrial revolution centered on factories producing cotton textiles with water-powered spinning and weaving machinery. In the 1820s, a group of merchants created a new factory town near Boston, incorporated as the city of Lowell in 1836. Here, they built a group of modern textile factories that brought together all phases of production from the spinning of thread to the weaving and finishing of cloth. By 1850, Lowell's fifty-two mills employed more than 10,000 workers.

At Lowell, young unmarried women from Yankee farm families dominated the workforce that tended the spinning machines. Competition among the mills led to a deterioration in working conditions and, beginning in the 1830s, protests among the workers. They engaged in strikes or "turn outs," and petitioned the legislature to limit their hours of labor. Founded in 1845, the Lowell Female Labor Reform Association published a series of *Factory Tracts* to expose conditions in the mills. Frequently, as in this account by an unnamed worker, they drew an analogy between their conditions and those of southern slaves.