

# **The New Model Federalist**

**A Series of Essays**

*Concerning*

**The Political Situation of These United States of America**

*Which*

**Draw Upon the Founding Principles of Our Union**

*In Order To*

**Propose a New Way Forward**

*So That*

**This Republic Shall Sustain Its Might and Liberty Throughout the 21<sup>st</sup> Century**

Composed with the advice and feedback of several patriotic Americans

*And*

Dedicated to those generations of citizens who have maintained the Republic before us

*It is thereby*

Respectfully submitted to the public for consideration

*“Thus, it is very likely that ultimately men would have been obliged to live forever under the government of one alone if they had not devised a kind of constitution that has all the internal advantages of republican government and the external force of monarchy. I speak of the federal republic.”*

—Charles de Secondat, Baron Montesquieu, 1748. *The Spirit of the Laws*, Bk. 9, Ch. 1.

*“It is rather for us to be here dedicated to the great task remaining before us – that from these honored dead we take increased devotion to that cause for which they gave the last full measure of devotion – that we here highly resolve that these dead shall not have died in vain – that this nation, under God, shall have a new birth of freedom – and that government of the people, by the people, for the people, shall not perish from the earth.”*

—Abraham Lincoln, November 19<sup>th</sup>, 1863. *Gettysburg Address*.

## Preface – The Situation of These United States

*After an unequivocal experience of the inefficacy of the subsisting Federal Government, you are called upon to deliberate on a new Constitution for the United States of America. The subject speaks its own importance; comprehending in its consequences, nothing less than the existence of the Union, the safety and welfare of the parts of which it is composed, the fate of an empire, in many respects, the most interesting in the world. —Alexander Hamilton, *Federalist No. 1*, October 27<sup>th</sup>, 1787.*

At the close of the 17<sup>th</sup> century, the West began to build its political edifice upon the foundation of the Enlightenment, and from that time on free societies have been able to persevere around the world. The United States of America, with its Declaration of Independence in 1776 and its Constitution in 1787, was the first country designed deliberately to be governed according to Enlightenment principles, and has to show for it two-hundred and forty-three years of largely prosperous and victorious history. Yet these principles and the freedom they bestow have from time to time been threatened: by slavery and absolutism in the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries; by fascism and communism in the 20<sup>th</sup>; and in the 21<sup>st</sup> by the insidious proponents of ‘illiberal democracy.’

‘Illiberal democracy,’ a term coined derisively by the theorist Fareed Zakaria, but which is favored today by the despots of Eastern Europe, is the false notion that a republic can exist as such merely by holding elections; that a majority, having once cast their vote for a leader, thus empowers him to suppress views he deems offensive to the majority; that the elected leader may, in the name of his own interpretation of the people’s will, repress the political rights of the dissenting minority; and that he may push aside all constraints of law and precedent that might otherwise prevent him from carrying out his self-defined mandate.

Yet ‘illiberal democracy’ is devoid of the enlightened ideas that are the cornerstones of a republic: freedom of speech, religion, assembly, and the press; the right to a fair trial; protection from self-incrimination or unwarranted search and seizure; consent of the governed; separation of powers, checks and balances; respect for property; and the inalienable rights of life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. Remove those founding stones, and the tower collapses. A true republic, governed by the precepts of classically liberal statecraft, serves before all other ends to preserve freedom. It holds elections not to choose a king, but because so many years of experience have proven that democracy is the best means of upholding liberty.

Challenges to this basis of free society are challenges to Western civilization itself and all the more so to these United States, which pride themselves on their freedom. Illiberal democracy is the tyranny of the majority; it is elective dictatorship; it is without liberty; it is not free.<sup>1</sup> Both the Republican and Democratic Parties, despite their storied histories, have failed to repudiate its siren call, which has sounded so loudly in recent years. The Founders of our Republic would not tolerate such inaction; nor would the philosophers who inspired them; and nor ought those who love our country and its founding principles. For if liberty cannot hold firm in these United States, the mightiest nation in the world, then it shall have no bastion anywhere. Thus must a free people take up the mantle of free government, and oppose those who would undermine it.

---

<sup>1</sup> “I wish you may not be going fast, and by the shortest cut, to that horrible and disgusting situation. Already there appears a poverty of conception, a coarseness and vulgarity in all the proceedings of the assembly and of all their instructors. Their liberty is not liberal. Their science is presumptuous ignorance. Their humanity is savage and brutal.” Edmund Burke, *Reflections on The Revolution in France*.

Our Republic has become torn between notions of ‘conservative’ and ‘liberal.’ Yet those words have been perverted over decades, masking the truth that those two guiding lights lead to a destination one and the same. ‘Liberal’ is now an epithet for political leftism, but in its classical sense it defines a yearning for freedom, for a society free of compulsion, in which each citizen may do as he or she pleases, so long as that action does not harm the public good, stringently defined. ‘Conservative’ is today associated with the political right, but in its true sense it defines a wish to preserve the achievements and customs of the past.

We – defined henceforth as the author, those who have aided me in this project, and all of those who might read these works and find them convincing – reject the modern falsifications of those words, and dare say that, as our Republic was established on classical liberal principles, to be conservative in these United States is to be liberal, and to be liberal is to be conservative. This Union cannot conserve its traditions without conserving the liberal ideals upon which it was founded; nor can it raise those ideals higher by demolishing the pillars of its heritage.

The citizens who drafted and advocated the U.S. Constitution were known as Federalists. George Washington was foremost among them. Alexander Hamilton, James Madison, and John Jay together wrote the Federalist Papers – the public explanation and defense of the Constitution by those who designed it. They had disagreements, but all strived to build a more perfect Union according to a federal plan and upon an enlightened foundation. We share those convictions, and are confident that they still can and ought to be applied to the United States in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, and that these United States can and ought to protect and perpetuate them in the wider world.

To those ends, we call for a vigorous defense of the freedoms enshrined in the First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution; limited and decentralized government in the spirit of that Constitution, which made a federal union of partly-sovereign States; exercise of representative democracy as befits a Republic; accountability of bureaucratic agencies to elected legislatures; moderation of the public debt; return of revenue to the States, with responsibility for spending it; extension of economic opportunity through competition and investment; free trade; expansion of the Union through representation for U.S. territories; a welcome to immigrants, provided they accept the responsibility of citizenship; credible use of U.S. might in foreign affairs; reform of international institutions to attain common aims; halt and reversal of global warming; and human space exploration leading to the spread of mankind’s civilization beyond the confines of Earth. We believe these goals to be compatible, reinforcing, and, in time, achievable. We shall expound on each in its own essay, wherein we examine the principles underlying it, convey our vision of what ought to be, and propose a few broad actions which may set our Union upon that path.

We, too, call ourselves Federalists, because our Republic is at its best when governed according to its federal design. Yet we also look to others, such as Democratic-Republicans, Whigs, Democrats, and Republicans, for ideas that two-and-a-half centuries of experience have shown to be wise. Our goal is balance; we do not seek to push our nation interminably towards some ideological extreme of left or right. This Republic has suffered enough from that. We seek a more perfect Union, well-situated on Enlightenment principles: free, tolerant, and open, yet serious about the responsibility of citizenship, confident in the value of liberty, and sure of these United States’ unique obligation and ability to defend it. Thus we ask you, fellow citizen, to read our argument from start to finish, and then make your own judgment of it.

—John P. Caves III, author, but above all, a humble U.S. Citizen