

That's what Cleveland *didn't* represent. That's what Wilson *didn't* represent. That's what Coolidge *didn't* represent.

That's what Roosevelt, in his own imperfect way, tried to represent. That's what poor Kennedy, who was assassinated, was groping to try to represent, too. All the best people at least tried to represent that, in their own way. And that, for us, as Americans, when we were good, was always, for us, our choice of Manifest Destiny. Thank you.

'The eyes of all people are upon us'

by H. Graham Lowry

The plain truth is that America's historic mission was to create a sovereign republic, to save the world. The beachhead for the new nation was John Winthrop's Massachusetts Bay Colony, a miraculous undertaking in 1630, when all of Europe was literally being consumed in the fires and pestilence of the Thirty Years War. From the republican institutions forged by John Winthrop and his associates, the Temple of Liberty was constructed as the new United States, after America's successful War of Independence.

Winthrop reviewed the degeneration of England in a 1629 treatise, arguing for the necessity of launching a republic in the New World:

This land grows weary of her inhabitants, so as man who is the most precious of all creatures is here more vile & base than the earth we tread upon, and of less price among us, than a horse or a sheep, masters are forced by authority to entertain servants, parents to maintain their own children, all towns complain of the burden of their poor though we have taken up many unnecessary, yea unlawful trades to maintain them. And we use the authority of the law to hinder the increase of people . . . , servants & neighbors (especially if they be poor) are counted the greatest burden which if things were right it would be the chiefest earthly blessing.

Instead of this ruinous policy, Winthrop issued a call for developing the North American continent for the benefit of mankind:

The whole earth is the Lord's garden & he hath given it to the sons of men, with a general condition, *Gen*:

1.28. Increase and multiply, replenish the earth and subdue it, which was again renewed to Noah. The end is double, moral and natural, that man might enjoy the fruits of the earth and God might have his due glory from the creature. Why then should we stand here striving for places of habitation . . . and in the meantime suffer a whole Continent, as fruitful and convenient for the use of man, to lie waste without any improvement.

Building the Massachusetts republic

Winthrop was elected governor of the company by its General Court, and skillfully negotiated a royal charter for the Massachusetts Bay Company which uniquely included powers to elect its own officers, establish its own laws, and govern its affairs directly in Massachusetts—rather than being ruled by stockholders in London. But this was not a stock company, motivated by accounting notions of profit and loss. It was instead a project to develop a new society, to nurture citizens, and ensure the rights bestowed upon them by their Creator. On April 25, 1630, less than two months after Charles I signed the Massachusetts Bay Charter, an advance party of 300 colonists set sail, assigned to establish the infrastructure for the much larger migration to follow.

They included engineers to lay out towns, as well as carpenters, brick-makers, and sawyers to build warehouses, a sawmill, ships for fishing and commerce, and fortifications for the colony's defense. Their cargo included seven cannon as well. Preparing for the next wave of settlers, Winthrop raised additional funds to provide transportation for poor families, to maintain ministers, and to build churches, public buildings, and still more fortifications.

On June 12, 1630, after a voyage of 76 days, four ships with 800 passengers under the command of John Winthrop, anchored in Salem harbor. Winthrop told his followers on board his flagship, the *Arbella*,

We must be willing to abridge ourselves of our superfluities, for the supply of other's necessities. We must uphold a familiar commerce together in all meekness, gentleness, patience, and liberality. We must delight in each other; make other's condition our own; rejoice together, mourn together, labor and suffer together, always having before our eyes our commission and community in the work as members of the same body. So shall we *keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace*. The Lord will be our God, and delight to dwell among us, as his own people, and will command a blessing upon us in all our ways. . . . For we must consider that we shall be as a City upon a hill. The eyes of all people are upon us.

More ships were already under way, and Governor Win-

throp soon presided over a struggling colony of 2,000 determined people. Guided by the principles he had set forth, Massachusetts grew to a population of 20,000 by 1650, and constituted the most advanced republic the world had ever seen. In 1636, the Massachusetts General Court—as its legislature was known then and still is today—voted to establish Harvard College, half a century before any other was established in America. The 1640s brought the first public system of compulsory elementary education, and a system of publicly supported academies for further instruction and college preparation. In 1641, a Body of Liberties was adopted, a constitutional definition of the powers and duties of the General Court, the judiciary, and the voters and citizens. Included was a criminal code prohibiting inconsistent penalties or punishments, and overturning the arbitrary use of precedent in English common law.

John Winthrop noted that the reason such a constitution had not been put into writing, during the initial struggle to establish the colony, was the fear of prematurely challenging a provision in the charter which prohibited the enactment of laws “repugnant to the laws of England.” In 1646, the legislature ordered an unprecedented extension of protection to the citizens of Massachusetts. The laws were to be *printed*, despite the fact that only one press existed in the colony, “so as we may have ready recourse to any of them, upon all occasions, whereby we may manifest our utter disaffection to arbitrary government. . . .”

The effort to forge a constitutional republic proceeded with a specific commitment to economic and industrial development. In 1640, the General Court voted sizable subsidies for the local manufacture of textiles and, especially for outfitting a fleet, passed measures in 1641 to stimulate the production of hemp. Twenty-one-year tax exemptions were also granted for all discoverers of mines. The governor’s son, John Winthrop, Jr., was dispatched to England to recruit skilled labor for iron manufacturing. The General Court backed the construction of iron works with a twenty-one-year monopoly, necessary lands, and a ten-year tax exemption, on condition that complete facilities be developed, from blast furnaces and forges, to rolling and slitting mills. The company would only be permitted to export iron after the colony’s needs were met.

Under the younger Winthrop’s direction, the Saugus Iron Works were established by 1647—the first automated, integrated industrial complex in the New World. By the end of its first year of operation, the Saugus Iron Works was producing eight tons of wrought iron per week, far beyond the output of the best works in England.

The colony further advanced its economic sovereignty in 1652 with the creation of a mint. Massachusetts issued its Pine Tree Shilling, redeemable only within the colony to prevent foreign draining of its hard currency, long into the century, until the destruction of its charter freedoms by royal decree.

The fight for liberty

The Massachusetts Bay Charter was under attack almost from the colony’s beginning, and in 1634, the King’s Privy Council ordered that it be returned to England. Governor Winthrop demonstrated that the issue was worth going to war over. The General Court authorized funds for improving the colony’s fortifications, and granted Winthrop and four of the magistrates “power to consult, direct and give command for the managing of any war that may befall us for the space of a next year’s ensuing.” Finally, it was ordered that a beacon be set on Sentry Hill (now Beacon Hill, the site of the Massachusetts legislature) at Boston, to give notice to the country of any danger.

Faced with the threat of armed popular resistance, the crown backed down; but the return of the charter was again demanded in 1638, coupled with the threat that King Charles would otherwise “reassume into his hands the whole plantation.” This time the colony responded by forming the Military Company of the Massachusetts, with Governor Winthrop himself serving as colonel of the 1,000-man First Massachusetts Regiment of Militia. This was the beginning of the republican militia system which spread throughout New England—and remained to produce the core of the Continental Army during the American Revolution.

Winthrop’s political defense foreshadowed the later arguments of America’s Declaration of Independence:

Lastly, if our patent be taken from us, (whereby we suppose we may claim interest in his Majesty’s favour and protection), the common people here will conceive that his Majesty hath cast them off, and that hereby they are freed from their allegiance and subjection, and thereupon will be ready to confederate themselves under a new government, for their necessary safety and subsistence.

To posterity, John Winthrop left a vision which guided generations of his successors during the century-and-a-half struggle, from the founding of Massachusetts Bay to the British surrender at Yorktown, to establish the United States. Winthrop himself enlarged that prospect in 1643 by creating the New England Confederation, which elected him its first president. Its Articles of Confederation were cited by Benjamin Franklin during the American Revolution, in explaining the Articles of Confederation of the United States to the French government.

John Winthrop, Jr. proceeded to unite the various Connecticut colonies into one; and, as its governor, negotiated a royal charter for it in 1662, with much the same self-governing powers as his father had secured for Massachusetts. The great statesman and philosopher Increase Mather continued the fight in Massachusetts, and denounced Charles II’s 1683 demand for “alterations” of the Bay Charter as

“inconsistent with the main end of their fathers’ coming to New England.” Cotton Mather, Increase’s son, led the Andros Rebellion in 1689, an armed but bloodless coup which clapt royal governor Edmund Andros and his henchmen into jail. Boston’s patriots proclaimed the independence of New England, with a sovereign judicial system, powers of trade and coinage, and a new system of credit for productive economic improvements.

The effort failed, but was not forgotten — any more than was the date on which Charles II finally revoked and voided the original Massachusetts charter. That infamous day — Oct. 23, 1684 — is given as the birthday of “*Poor Richard, an American Prince, without Subjects,*” by Benjamin Franklin, in the very first issue of *Poor Richard’s Almanack*, in 1733.

Cotton Mather’s own contributions to realizing John Winthrop’s vision are exemplified by his *Essays to Do Good*, the organizing manual he published in 1710 for developing a republican citizenry:

It is an invaluable *honor*, to do *good*; it is an incomparable *pleasure*. A man must look upon himself as *dignified* and *gratified* by God, when an *opportunity* to do (good) is put into his hands. He must embrace it with *rapture*, as enabling him to answer the great End of his being.

America’s mission remained clearly defined. “*Govern-ment* is called, the ordinance of God,” Mather wrote. Thus, “it should vigorously pursue those noble and blessed *ends* for which it is *ordained: the good of mankind.*”

Benjamin Franklin wrote in 1784 to Cotton’s son Samuel — who had read the Declaration of Independence from his pulpit in 1776 — that *Essays to Do Good* had “an influence on my conduct though life; for I have always set a greater value on the character of a doer of good, than on any other kind of reputation; and if I have been, as you seem to think, a useful citizen, the public owes the advantage of it to that book.”

And so the republican nation-state known as the United States was established, on these principles, by these men and others who followed them. In 1807, John Adams wrote to Benjamin Rush, a fellow signer of the Declaration, “I have always laughed at the affectation of representing American Independence as a novel idea, as a modern discovery, as a late invention. The idea of it as a possible thing, as a probable event, nay, as a necessary and unavoidable measure, in case Great Britain should assume an unconstitutional authority over us, has been familiar to Americans from the first settlement of the country, and was as well understood by Gov. Winthrop . . . as by Gov. Samuel Adams.”

Editor’s note: The more elaborated story of the early history of the American republic can be found in H. Graham Lowry, *How the Nation Was Won, America’s Untold Story* (Washington, D.C.: Executive Intelligence Review, 1987).

John Quincy Adams and the Community of Principle

by Nancy Spannaus

John Quincy Adams, the son of Founding Father John Adams, and the intellectual heir of Benjamin Franklin, played a pivotal role in defining the foreign policy of the young United States. His concept for that policy flowed directly from his belief that the United States of America was founded upon principles which were derived from the Christian religion,¹ and that the United States should preserve and extend those principles, without any compromise with imperial or colonial powers, and without becoming an imperial power itself.

During his tenure as Secretary of State, under the Monroe administrations, Adams produced an abundance of memoranda and speeches which defined his view of American foreign policy, especially around the period of the Adams-Onis Treaty of 1818, and the formulation of the Monroe Doctrine (1823). The events around preparing these two documents show that Adams was fully committed to creating a continental republic based on anti-colonial principles, and that he based his idea of international alliances upon the concept of a *community of principle* with fellow sovereign republics.

According to Samuel Flagg Bemis, a leading twentieth-century historian, Adams’s diplomatic history defines him as a, if not the, leading protagonist of what became known later as “Manifest Destiny.” But while the specific coiners of that phrase, notably John O’Sullivan of New York,² used it to justify merely a land grab, including President James Polk’s war with Mexico (1846-48), Adams and his faction insisted that the westward expansion of the United States not result in the spread of slavery, or conquest of other lands, but rather the extension of republicanism as expressed in the Declaration of Independence. Adams opposed the Mexican war, and was prepared to dump his continental aspirations, if necessary, if it meant the expansion of slavery.

A continental republic

From his entry into politics at a very young age, John Quincy Adams advocated the expansion of the United States

1. See “An Oration Delivered Before the Inhabitants of the Town of Newburyport on the Sixty-First Anniversary of the Declaration of Independence,” reprinted in part in *The New Federalist*, Vol. 13, No. 32.

2. See Frederick Merk, *Manifest Destiny and Mission in American History* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1963).