

# BULLETIN

## OF THOMAS PAINE FRIENDS

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### FROM *AGRARIAN JUSTICE* 1797

(In: *The Life and Works of Thomas Paine*, ed. William Van der Weyde, 1925, X, 1-37,  
New Rochelle NY: Thomas Paine National Historical Society)

This work was initially intended for the French, although it was published in English in both France and England at the same time. Editor Van der Weyde's commentary is a useful preliminary to Paine's text.

*This tract, as Paine calls it, is identified with the Theophilanthropic movement which Paine started in Paris, in 1786-7, and later introduced in America. It is important as being a precursor of the single tax movement, popularized by Henry George, in his "Progress and Poverty," a century later.*

*Paine issued this pamphlet as a proposal to the French Government, at a time when readjustment of landed property had become necessary through the Revolution.*

*It was suggested to him by a sermon published by the Bishop of Llandaff, on "The Wisdom and Goodness of God in having made both rich and poor." Paine denies that God made rich and poor, declaring "He made only male and female, and gave them the earth for their inheritance."*

---Excerpts, from diverse parts of AJ---

"It is a position not to be controverted that the earth, in its natural, uncultivated state was, and ever would have continued to be, *the common property of the human race*. In that state every man would have been born to property....as it is impossible to separate the improvement made by cultivation from the earth itself, upon which that improvement is made, the idea of landed property arose....but it is nevertheless true, that it is the value of the improvement, only, and not the earth itself, that is individual property.

"Every proprietor, therefore, of cultivated lands, owes to the community a *ground-rent* (for I know of no better term to express the idea) for the land which he holds; and it is from this ground-rent that the fund proposed in this plan is to issue.....

"In advocating the case of the persons thus dispossessed, it is a right, and not a charity, that I am pleading for.....

"I shall now proceed to the plan I have to propose, which is: To create a national fund, out of which there shall be paid to every person, when arrived at the age of twenty-one years, the sum of fifteen pounds sterling, as a compensation in part, for the loss of his or her natural inheritance, by the introduction of the system of landed property: And also, the sum of ten pounds per annum, during life, to every person now living, of the age of fifty years, and to all others as they shall arrive at that age.....

"Various methods may be proposed for this purpose [creating The National Fund for the payments] but that which appears to be the best....is at the moment that property is passing by the death of one person to the possession of another. In this case, the bequeather gives nothing; the receiver pays nothing. The only matter to him is that the monopoly of natural inheritance, to which there never was a right, begins to cease in his person..... [Paine gives detailed calculations to arrive at a 10% "inheritance or wealth tax"]

"The plan here proposed will reach the whole. It will immediately relieve....three classes of wretchedness---the blind, the lame, and the aged poor; and it will furnish the rising generation with means to prevent their becoming poor.....

"The superstitious awe, the enslaving reverence, that formerly surrounded affluence, is passing away in all countries, and leaving the possessor of property to the convulsions of accidents. When wealth and splendor, instead of fascinating the multitude, excite emotions of disgust; when, instead of drawing forth admiration, it is beheld as an insult upon wretchedness; when the ostentatious appearance it makes serves to call the right of it into question, the case of property becomes critical, and it is only in a system of justice that the possessor can contemplate security....."

---Selections by Martha Spiegelman

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#### *A Short Mission Statement*

*The Mission of Thomas Paine Friends, Inc., is to encourage people to learn about and from Thomas Paine, his times and philosophy so that they may be inspired to participate in public affairs reflective of the spirit of Paine's life, thought and ideals.*

*To Know Paine, Read Him*  
Florence Stapleton -- Thomas Paine Chronicler

### Some Websites and Blogs

**thomas-paine-friends.org** --Our TPF website is maintained by Ed Dodson. Anyone advocating for Paine can send Paine-related news to: [edod08034@gmail.com](mailto:edod08034@gmail.com).

**facebook.com/thomaspainefriends?ref=br\_tf** --Facebook page of TPF. Enter discussions here.

**religionpaine.org** --Maurice Bisheff maintains this site of several essays and seminar pieces by him and James Tepfer, about Paine's religious and philosophical views.

**valorww2.com** --This site, maintained by Victor Madeson, contains many articles about Paine, including *Commons Sense Clubs, Societies of Political Inquiry, and other subjects.*

**cooperativeindividualism.org** --The School for Cooperative Individualism, Director, Edward J. Dodson, contains a large archive of articles about Paine. Also, summary of the life of Henry George and list of courses at the Henry George Schools.

**historyisonourside.wordpress.com** --Frances Chiu's blog has excerpts of writings of 18th century and later authors, such as James Murray, Richard Price, certainly Thomas Paine, with relation to our current political, social, cultural matters.

**algerblog.blogspot.com** --Blogger Algernon D'Amassa writes on a range of subjects, such as Paine's life, ideas, and influence, plus Zen Buddhism, politics, environment, arts, and more.

**floridaveteransforcommonsense.org** --In Sarasota FL, it sponsors an annual Paine birthday gala, as well as many human rights, peace and justice forums. TPF members Gene Jones and Mike Burns are president and vice president.

**thomaspainesociety.org** --Website of Thomas Paine Society, Pasadena CA. A Research Library is a major facility of TPS; see the website for details of its use and how to donate publications.

**thomaspainesocietyuk.org.uk** --This Thomas Paine Society in England publishes articles about liberal-progressive thinkers and movements in its *Journal of Radical History*.

**rjlindsey.com** --One-man show, "Thomas Paine, Voice of the American Revolution," by TPF member, Robert J. Lindsey. He has a new show, "Benjamin Franklin: Stories of Revolution".

**thelifeofthomaspaine.org** --Ian Ruskin performs his Paine monologue at many locations. News of the film schedule on PBS, plus related events, is at the website.

**commonsensesociety.com** --This Society organizes many international forums and workshops, including in the U. S.

[facebook.com/pages/Fort-Lee-Common-Sense-Society/199545953428717](https://www.facebook.com/pages/Fort-Lee-Common-Sense-Society/199545953428717) --Fort Lee NJ Common Sense Society is preparing to raise a new Paine statue in 2017.

**thomaspaine.org** --Thomas Paine National Historical Association, located in New Rochelle NY.

**kenburchell.blogspot.com** --The Thomas Paine Review posts recent publications and news on Paine and related subjects.

**www.thomas-paine-friends.org**  
Website Manager, Edward J. Dodson  
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# President's Message

What might Thomas Paine think of the world of today? I suspect most of us would agree that "the times that try men's souls" have, if anything, worsened in recent years. If Paine were alive today would he conclude we are progressing in the quest for the full enjoyment of our unalienable rights? Or, would he be chagrined by the widespread loss of individual liberty and the resurgence of intolerance?

Most of us in the United States and other politically stable countries enjoy some degree of relative security with access to much of what makes life comfortable. Although our challenges are certainly real -- some minor, some major -- what we share is a feeling of normalcy in our day-to-day activities for the most part. However, Paine would undoubtedly shake his head in wonder that after two centuries, humanity has failed to find a path to peaceful coexistence.

Each of us who has found Thomas Paine Friends and become a member share a unique bond. We have acquired from Paine a remarkable perspective on the human condition, on the causes and cures for our most serious political problems. Thus, we have embraced a responsibility to do what we can to encourage others at least to read something

of what Paine has to contribute to the grand public dialogue on contemporary issues. Some of us are in a position to do more than this -- teaching, writing or engaging in public action through the political process.

As we know, victories by peacefully working for change are few and far between, and right now it seems like the dominoes are falling in a direction Paine would find quite fearful. Perhaps these words from Paine will provide a degree of comfort as we travel through the coming year:

"The mutual dependence and reciprocal interest which man has upon man, and all parts of a civilized community upon each other, create that great chain of connection which holds it together. The landholder, the farmer, the manufacturer, the merchant, the tradesman, and every occupation, prospers by the aid which each receives from the other, and from the whole. Common interest regulates their concerns, and forms their laws; and the laws which common usage ordains, have a greater influence than the laws of government. In fine, society performs for itself almost every thing which is ascribed to government."

---Ed Dodson January 2018

*Edward J. Dodson is TPF President, Director of the School for Cooperative Individualism, gives courses in the Henry George School, and in the Osher Institute at Temple University.*

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## Two TPF Committees Formed – Discussions Started

The full Board of Directors, attending the teleconference Annual Meeting in December-2017, formed two committees:

- 1) A Klara Rukshina Scholar Legacy Committee;
- 2) A Thomas Paine Memorial Committee.

Designated funds donated by member Martin Brod spurred formation of the committees.

The aims of the Rukshina Committee are to try to have published in English some manuscripts of the late Klara Rukshina, a TPF Board member and Paine scholar; as well as to locate an academic or similar institution to house her large archive of Paine studies. Volunteers for the committee are Frances Chiu, Victor Madeson, Rick Robyn, Martha Spiegelman, Irwin Spiegelman. Funds so far for this purpose are \$1,500 donated by the Martin Brod trust fund plus about \$300 donated by friends of Klara.

The Memorial Committee is charged with exploring the creation of a physical memorial such as a plaque or statue,

with its installation in Washington DC, if possible. Volunteers for the committee are Ed Dodson, Rick Robyn, Victor Madeson, Maurice Bisheff, Martha Spiegelman. Under discussion are site selection, structure of a memorial, contacting organizations to seek support, fund-raising, publicity, among other tasks. It is envisaged that TPF will look first for a Washington DC location for this Paine Memorial. Committee members will contact the Newseum, Willard Hotel, Howard University and other academic institutions in DC. Ed Dodson suggested that a college or university might wish to partner with TPF in a Paine seminar or symposium as well. A \$10,000 start-up fund for a Paine memorial was donated by the Martin Brod trust fund.

Both committees are open to additional members, and to suggestions. Contact the president of TPF, Edward Dodson, at, [edod08034@gmail.com](mailto:edod08034@gmail.com).



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## Spirituality of Thomas Paine

Ed Dodson recently created a short YouTube video titled, "Spirituality of Thomas Paine December 2017". View and hear it at, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HAc5bKV1S0E&feature=youtu.be>

Dodson opens with the following paragraph: "Thomas Paine challenged conventional wisdom in many ways, including a belief in a conscious creator. This video presents his fundamental spirituality, as reflected in the human capacity for reason and scientific investigation."

# Thomas Paine in Opera: Thoughts on Viewing *Thomas Paine in Violence*

by Mariam Touba

"*Agrarian Justice: The Musical*"? or, perhaps, "Variations on a Theme of *Agrarian Justice*"? One can only speculate on a possible subtitle for *Thomas Paine in Violence*, Paul Pinto's eighty-minute opera that premiered in New York City in November 2017 at HERE, in association with *thingNY*, both forums for experimental theater.

Pinto, writer, composer, actor, producer, and promoter of electronic sound performance, is the prime creative force behind this innovative work. The self-described "opera-sermon" was directed by playwright and composer Rick Burkhardt and choreographed by Chloe Treat. It was presented to appreciative viewers at a venue on the edge of Manhattan's SoHo with a cacophony of unusual stimuli and new sounds.

Lights, brilliant and stark, open on Thomas Paine, seated, elevated over a sound studio. He is dressed in a white gown and a shawl that may evoke the ethereal, or simply the sleepwear in which he died. Paine hovers above the accoutrements and culture of a radio station, itself a somewhat antiquated method of communication in our digital age. The performer, Joan La Barbara, is a woman, an artistic choice pointing us toward the dynamics of powerlessness. La Barbara is renowned for vocal versatility and technique, and, with her chiseled features, she inhabits the role so well that this gender-bending casting has, ironically, less impact. Her virtuosity is matched by an ensemble of four men in constant motion, leaping, dancing, prancing, and enunciating to perfection. They serve as a Greek chorus of Paine's thoughts, memories, and subconscious blended with our own contemporary concerns. When the inevitable reference to present-day politics, culture, or technology arises, the anachronism is followed by the quick, winking aside, "Whatever that means," a source of humor in a serious production that nonetheless does not lack for laughs. The words of this "Manchorus" come out in rapid-fire phrases, sometimes preceded by an announced introduction, "Biography!" Paineites have the advantage here, as isolated snippets—the chorus seldom verbalizes full sentences—like "making stays," "bridges," "near execution," would make no sense to those not familiar with his life story. (I found myself laughing out loud at the plaint, "Harvey Keitel wearing my hats,"—a fleeting reference to Keitel's nuanced portrayal of Paine in the 1982 Ettore Scola film *La Nuit de Varennes*). A leitmotif is Paine's recitation of illness—major and minor—that plagued him in his life. The list is startlingly accurate—typhoid, abscess, gout, vertigo, a series of strokes, etc.—reflecting Paul Pinto's intimate knowledge of Thomas Paine's life. Pinto must know that the

resilient Paine was no hypochondriac—rather the list is more likely a metaphor for the illnesses in society that prevent Paine's vital message from being heard.

Indeed, that is the theme: virtually the only full sentences in the opera are the words of *Agrarian Justice*, Paine's 1797 work that addresses and proposes solutions for the systematic income inequality of his day, but, as Joan La Barbara/Thomas Paine tries to read them over the cosmic airwaves, she/he is always stymied. Nonetheless, they are repeated often enough—especially the phrase "justice, and not charity"—that they are absorbed by an audience mostly unfamiliar with much of Paine's life and writings (a long excerpt from *Agrarian Justice* is also provided in the program for good measure).

This same frustration manifests itself differently when the Manchorus articulates two of Paine's sentences. They recite, "What we obtain too cheap, we esteem too lightly" from the *American Crisis I* in perfect harmony, but, in an amazing rapid repetition, the phrase morphs into something else, either sinister or meaningless. The opera actually closes with Paine's observation on poverty from *Agrarian Justice*, "More persons fall annually into it than get out of it," but this strange, thrilling chant eventually turns into "Poor sons hate your rights." The "violence" of the opera's title is this evisceration of Paine's message, words as crucial for our age as for his.

But, speaking of words, they sometimes fail in this production. Paine, as he tries with endless frustration to broadcast his message, blurts out obscenities, over and over—sometimes bleeping them out because this is radio, after all. My complaint is not uttered out of prudery: while curse words are ubiquitous in our society and on stage, Paine did not use them. This is one aspect of his character that is not in dispute; he eschewed vulgar language and off-color stories. The challenge for Pinto and all other playwrights and screen-writers—wordsmiths, all—who want to depict Thomas Paine remains to capture their subject's passion, clear language, and approachability without falling back on the too easy use of crude language.

Mariam Touba, TPF member, is reference librarian at the New-York Historical Society, where she was curator of a Paine exhibit in 2005.



Thomas Paine's Spirit sits at the center amid the cacophony of voices and instruments in a radio studio

Photo from: <http://here.org/resident-artists/project/thomas-paine-in-violence/> --with permission of Paul Pinto

# PROFESSOR ZINN MEETS THOMAS PAINE

by Irwin Spiegelman

From PADL (Paine Anti-Defamation League), dedicated to protecting Thomas Paine's reputation

*The People's History of the United States* by Howard Zinn, since 1980, has been a major source for expressing the alternative view of American history. Zinn, in the 20th anniversary edition (p. 17), writes, "Was the bloodshed and deceit from Columbus to Cortes, Pizarro, the Puritans – a necessity for the human race to progress from savagery to civilization? ...If there *are* necessary sacrifices to be made for human progress, is it not essential to hold to the principle that those to be sacrificed must make the decision themselves?"



Zinn proceeds to excoriate the all too many conventional history texts, to which we all were exposed, which concentrate on the political and military "heroes" as well as the various elites "responsible for the extraordinary progress" our civilization has made and who have greatly benefited from murder and pillage. This history book is dedicated to native Americans, black people, both slave and free, brown peoples, the working class and to women, all of whom have suffered and continue to be oppressed by systematic discrimination and injustice. It is mainly their stories that his book relates from 1492 to 1992 and beyond.

How well does Thomas Paine fare in Howard Zinn's world view? Among Revolutionary War notables, such as George Washington, Thomas Jefferson, Alexander Hamilton, Samuel Adams and John Adams, Paine takes top honors, with some criticism from Zinn.

This edition of PADL looks at Paine through the eyes of an important critic of conventional American history. There are four references to Paine in *The People's History*.

The first lauds Paine as one of the leaders of mechanics and other workers in Philadelphia to rally in favor of the Pennsylvania Constitution, thought to be the most progressive up to that time. According to historian Gary B. Nash, with Paine among its leaders, they "launched a full-scale attack on wealth and even on the right to acquire unlimited private property." Zinn points out that these workers, like their counterparts throughout the colonies, were as much upset by their meager rewards compared to the wealthiest colonists as they were by British rule.

The second reference concerns *Common Sense*, with a few of Paine's best comments such as, "Society in every state is a blessing, but Government even in its best state is but a necessary evil." Zinn is impressed and sees it as a strong argument for independence. From Paine's powerful attack on monarchy, Zinn chose Paine's case of William the Conqueror imposing himself and his descendants' rule on unwilling Britons: "A French bastard landing with an armed Banditti.... is in plain terms a very

paltry rascally original. It certainly has no divinity in it."

There are Paine quotes on the questions of colonial dependence on Britain in trade; Paine makes short work of that and fires off a salvo showing Britain to be a hindrance toward good relations with Europe because of Britain's chronic quarrels and wars with its neighbors.

Zinn's last Paine quote in this section is the powerful summary sentence, "Everything that is right and reasonable pleads for separation. The blood of the slain and the weeping voice of nature cries 'TIS TIME TO PART.'"

The third reference starts with, "Paine himself came out of 'the lower orders' of England". Zinn goes on, "But his great concern seems to have been to speak for a middle group." He quotes Paine, "There is an extent of riches, as well as an extreme of poverty, which by harrowing the circles of a man's acquaintance, lessens his opportunities of general knowledge." Zinn can be challenged on this point by arguing that Paine is referring to the most extremes of wealth and poverty and that the overwhelming population fell into Paine's middle group.

On the controversy over the adoption of the US Constitution, Paine was on the side of urban workers who favored a strong central government. Zinn concludes, "He seemed to believe that such a government could represent some great common interest. In this sense, he lent himself perfectly to the myth of the Revolution -- that it was on behalf of a united people." Zinn's title for Chapter 5 is *A Kind of Revolution*.

Zinn's severest criticism of Paine comes with his association with Robert Morris, one of the wealthiest men in Pennsylvania, and Paine's approval of the formation of the Bank of North America. The details show that Paine, in 1780, as the clerk of the Pennsylvania Assembly, read a desperate letter from George Washington seeking immediate funds for the troops encamped for the winter at Morristown NJ. Paine immediately and publicly contributed \$500 to a relief fund and met with financial leaders, including Robert Morris, to get the prosperous to contribute. The appeal was so successful that the financing by the Bank of North America went forward to support the war. It is agreed that the Bank helped to back the war effort, until France responded with funds to carry the war to victory. (Remember Paine accompanying Col. John Laurens on his successful trip to France for that funding.) Later Paine entered into an agreement with Robert Morris, Robert Livingston and George Washington to write in favor of states like Rhode Island to tax its citizens and help fund the war effort. Details of Paine's transaction with Robert Morris can be found in Moncure Conway's biography.

The last reference is found in chapter 6, *The Intimately Oppressed*. Zinn mentions, "Ideas of female equality were in the air during and after the Revolution. Tom Paine spoke out for the equal rights of women." In the same paragraph,

Continued on page 6, *Zinn on Paine*

# THOMAS PAINE BIRTHDAY CELEBRATIONS, 2018



**AMHERST MA** The Thomas Paine birthday celebration will be on Saturday, January 27, at 1:30 pm, at Jones Library, 43 Amity St., Amherst. We take this opportunity to show a documentary film, "Atticus v the Architect", the saga of Don Siegelman (Atticus), former governor (Dem) of Alabama, who was railroaded into prison by a corrupt justice system and the machinations of conservative politicians such as Karl Rove (Architect). Contact: [spiegelmanmartha@gmail.com](mailto:spiegelmanmartha@gmail.com) / 413-253-7934

**PASADENA CA** Celebrate Thomas Paine's birthday, Sunday, January 28th, at 7 pm. Join Thomas Paine (Ian Ruskin), Eleanor Roosevelt (Ellen Snortland), musician Harold Payne and surprise guests at our Annual Headstrong Evening Club at the Castle Green, 99 So. Raymond Ave., Pasadena. Enjoy rousing conversation, libations, food. Topic, Income Inequality: Was Thomas Paine's *Agrarian Justice* a blueprint for "Universal Basic Income"? Alaine Lowell, Executive Director, Thomas Paine Society, [www.thomaspainesociety.org](http://www.thomaspainesociety.org)



**SARASOTA FL** Florida Veterans for Common Sense celebrates the legacy of patriot and Founding Father Thomas Paine with a Birthday Party celebrating his memory. At The Francis, 1289 Palm Ave., at 6:00 pm on Saturday Feb 3. Enjoy a lovely dinner and jazz by the Pine View Jazz Quartet. Tom Walker, will be presented with the Paine Award. Also, our speaker is nationally renowned Col. Lawrence Wilkerson (USA Ret), Chief of Staff to former Secretary of State, Colin Powell. Tickets are \$75 and should be ordered through EventBrite at <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/thomas-paine-birthday-celebration-tickets-41576754191?aff=es2>  
Contact: [mtburns44@gmail.com](mailto:mtburns44@gmail.com)

**SAUK CENTER WI** The Free Congregation of Sauk County – "free thought in religion since 1852" – will celebrate its 166th annual Painesfest. The program will feature three young women talking about what they see as today's "American Crisis". The presentation will be followed by a discussion and a potluck meal. Free, public is invited, 307 Polk St., Sauk City. We believe we have the longest running Painesfest in the U.S. More information about our congregation can be found at, [www.freecongregation.org](http://www.freecongregation.org). Thank you, Susan Larkin, Administrator / Contact: [free\\_congregation@frontier.com](mailto:free_congregation@frontier.com) / 608-643-3131



*Regrettably, organizations in three cities in which Paine resided in America – Philadelphia, Bordentown NJ, New Rochelle NY---did not report Paine birthday events.*

## ...Zinn on Paine, from page 4

Mary Wollstonecraft is mentioned as responding to Edmund Burke's, *Reflections on the Revolution in France*, and to Burke's shocking comment that, "a woman is but an animal, and an animal not of the highest order."

Here, Zinn seems to be referring to an article, *An Occasional Letter on the Female Sex*, in the *Pennsylvania Magazine*, August, 1775, edited by Paine. Moncure Conway, Paine biographer, called it the earliest plea for women in America. Later research found

that the article was written by a Frenchman, but certainly Paine gets high marks for publishing it.

In conclusion, Zinn meets Paine and Paine is admired, but Zinn has a deep problem, that Paine would recognize, how America and most of the world can continue down a path where human rights take a back seat to corporate and individual enrichment in the age of climate change, wars and belligerence, and extreme impoverishment.

## "The Democratic Peace Theory Reframed: The Impact of Modernity" by Azar Gat

In: *World Politics*, vol 58, no 1, Oct 2005, pp 73-100 / Published by Cambridge University Press.

For the full article, see, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/40060125>

Sent by Sidney Moss, TPF Board Member

**ABSTRACT** The democratic peace theory—the idea that democratic or liberal states never or very rarely go to war with each other and that they are less likely to become involved in militarized disputes (MIDs) among themselves—is the most robust, "lawlike" finding generated by the discipline of international relations. It is also the one with the greatest significance for the real world. Introduced in the 1970s, the democratic peace theory has since gathered momentum and gained credence, withstanding extensive criticism and continuously being developed, amended, and refined in the process. In practical terms, the theory suggests that a world of liberal/democratic states will be peaceful, an idea long ago championed by such figures as Thomas Paine, Immanuel Kant, and Woodrow Wilson. The theory has clear policy implications that drew the attention of the Clinton administration and became the centerpiece of President George W. Bush's foreign policy in the wake of 9/11.

This article argues that the democratic peace theorists have overlooked the defining development that underlies that peace—and so much else—during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries: the industrial-technological revolution. Not only did that revolution make democracy on a country scale (as opposed to democratic city-states) possible; it also made all the countries that experienced the revolution—democratic and nondemocratic—far less belligerent in comparison with preindustrial times, with the interdemocratic peace representing only the most striking manifestation of that development. In shaping policy toward undeveloped and developing countries it should be realized that democracy is difficult to institute and sustain where economic and social modernization has not taken root; nor would democracy in itself necessarily lead to a democratic peace before such development has occurred.

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- YES, I will work on THOMAS PAINE DAY in my state.
- YES, I want to work on a project of Thomas Paine Friends. Please contact me.
- YES, I want to participate in and suggest activities related to public recognition of Thomas Paine.
- YES, I want my Paine organization / group / project listed in the *BULLETIN*.
- YES, I have news of Paine activities to post in the *BULLETIN*; or a short article (about 1,000 words) for the *BULLETIN*.
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*To Know Paine, Read Him* ~ Florence Stapleton, Thomas Paine Chronicler



**A Few Short Reports**



**Thomas Paine appears again and again in speeches and writings**

**Professor M. Naganathan of Tamil Nadu delivered two Martyrs' Day speeches in the US, in New York on November 27, 2017 and on December 2, 2017 in New Jersey**

Sent by Edward J. Dodson | In: [EINPresswire.com/](http://EINPresswire.com/) --December 19, 2017

Dr. M. Naganathan PhD, is former Vice-Chairman of the State Planning Commission of the Government of Tamil Nadu.

[Following are only the few lines, extolling **Thomas Paine**, from Dr. Naganathan's important political speeches.]

Respected Prime Minister of Transnational Government of Tamil Eelam, Mr. Ruthrakumaran, and dear friends, I join with you today in the Martyrs' Day celebration and pay my respects to the great freedom fighters who sacrificed their lives for the cause of Tamil Eelam. The great Tamil Leader Prabakaran has emerged as an international leader of Tamils by his eminence and supreme sacrifice.

Before coming to this meeting, I visited the memorial of the great thinker **THOMAS PAINE** on 26th Nov 2017 in New York. He is one of the English men settled in America who extended staunch support for American independence..... Thomas Paine, though an Englishman, he had laid the foundations for American war of Independence. Thomas Paine had once said that "the harder the conflict, the more glorious the triumph". I

feel his statement is applicable to the Eelam struggle and the days are not far off to realise the dream of Eelam.

Another famous writing of **THOMAS PAINE** is related to the oppression and suppression of the rights of the people of America. He remarked, "Small islands, not capable of protecting themselves, are the proper objects of kingdom to take under their care, but there is something very absurd in supposing a continent to be perpetually governed by an island". Though present-day Eelam may appear to be a small island, it was a big continent. When the continental breakdown took place some thousands of years ago, Tamil Nadu and Eelam remained together. It is a fact that Tamils are very ancient and civilised people among the peoples of various countries in the world.

**John Nichols compares Bill Moyers and Thomas Paine in column, "Most Valuable Modern Pamphleteer"**

In: *The Nation*, January 15/22, 2018, page 24

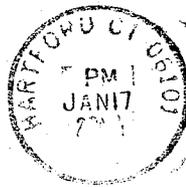
*Excerpt* — Moyers, 83, announced in December that the last of his many media platforms, BillMoyers.com, would "go into archive mode." It's a good bet he'll keep speaking out, but his decision inspired an outpouring of appreciation, reminding us that, as his pamphleteering

hero **TOM PAINE** did in the 18th century, Moyers has popularized revolutionary ideas, radical proposals, and transformational movements that will come to be seen as the common sense of the 21st century.

**More Thomas Paine in Writings on page 8**



*Independence Is My Happiness...  
My Country Is The World,  
My Religion Is To Do Good  
Rights of Man, part 2, 1792*



12-31-22  
EDWARD J.  
and DEBORAH DODSON  
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## BULLETIN

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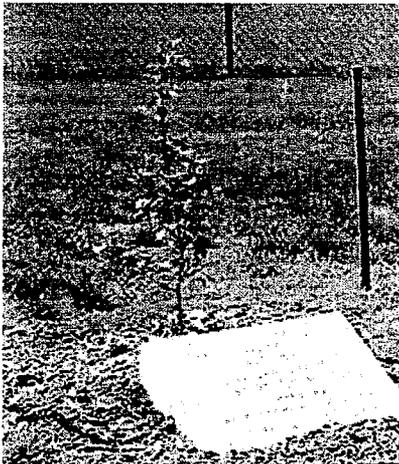
JANUARY 2018

### MEMBERSHIPS AND RENEWALS

**THE DATE ON THE MAIL LABEL ABOVE IS YOUR MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL DATE.  
PLEASE RENEW IF YOUR RENEWAL DATE HAS PASSED. DUES ARE \$10 PER YEAR.  
THE *BULLETIN* IS A MEMBERSHIP BENEFIT.**

...*Thomas Paine in Writings*, from page 7

Ti 01/17



**In: Sippican Week (covering Marion, Mattapoisett and Rochester MA)  
by Andrea Ray | Dec 19, 2017 | Photo by Andrea Ray  
Sent to the *Bulletin* by Edward J. Dodson**

The "Peace Tree," a young ginkgo-biloba, was planted in the Dexters Lane baseball fields in Rochester MA in 2017 during an annual Arbor Day observance. A commemorative plaque was unveiled at the ceremony, and Thomas Paine's poem "Liberty Tree" was read.

**THE "PEACE TREE"** ~~~ Former Town Administrator Mike McCue donated the ginkgo-biloba sapling to the town. The sapling might seem insignificant, but it is actually from "Hibakujumoku," the "Survivor Tree", which was located 1,370 feet from the epicenter of the bomb blast that leveled Hiroshima, and it managed to survive the atomic onslaught. The tree is over 200 years old. Saplings from the survivor tree are distributed around the world as "peace-bearing trees." Rochester is in rare company—one of the other locations to boast such a sapling is the United Nations headquarters in Geneva, Switzerland.

**THE "LIBERTY TREE"** ~~~ The "Liberty Elm" is a hybrid elm, created to resist the ravages of Dutch elm disease, which killed millions of American elms in the 1930s. In 1985, New Hampshire Boy Scout Ian Burns chose to plant Liberty Elms as his Eagle Scout project; since then, the Boy Scouts of America have partnered with the Elm Research Institute to plant Liberty Elms far and wide.

In 2008, Rochester's Boy Scout Troop 31 pitched in at the dedication of a newly planted "Liberty Elm" on the front lawn of Plumb Memorial Library. Thomas Paine's poem "Liberty Tree" was read at the ceremony.

Conservation Commissioner Laurene Gerrior pointed out that there was an original "Liberty Tree," an old elm, planted on the Rochester Common at the time of the American Revolution. "Colonists argued under them, and they celebrated under them," she said. "There was one close by here somewhere."

### THE FREETHOUGHT SOCIETY OF PHILADELPHIA'S THOMAS PAINE FOUNDATION / MEMORIAL COMMITTEE

(TPFMC) conducted an ambitious eight-stop tour of Paine historic sites in France. Margaret Downey was the prime mover of the event in September 2017 to coincide with the International Freethought Conference in Paris. TPFMC is now working on a week-long Paine tour in England. Discussions are underway for a future "Walk in the Footsteps of Thomas Paine" tour in Philadelphia and van tours in Morristown and Bordentown NJ,

New York City, and New Rochelle NY. It seems that "the footsteps" may be similar to the Thomas Paine Friends tour—Philadelphia, Bordentown NJ, Morristown NJ, Fort Lee NJ, New Rochelle NY, New York City—in October 2014, even to TPF's title: "Following in the Footsteps of Thomas Paine".

Visit the Freethought Society E-zine: [www.ftociety.org](http://www.ftociety.org)