

system all Europe has long groaned, and from it England is not yet free. Game laws, borough tenures, and tyrannical monopolies of numerous kinds, still remain among us; but rejoicing as we sincerely do, in the freedom of others, till we shall happily accomplish our own, we intended to commemorate this prelude to the universal extirpation of the feudal system, by meeting on the anniversary of that day (the fourth of August) at the Crown and Anchor.

From this meeting we were prevented by the interference of certain *unnamed* and *skulking* persons with the master of the tavern, who informed us, that on *their* representations he could not receive us. Let those who live by, or countenance feudal oppressions, take the reproach of this ineffectual meanness and cowardice to themselves. They cannot stifle the public declaration of our honest, open, and avowed opinions.

These are our principles, and these our sentiments. They embrace the interest and happiness of the great body of the nation of which we are a part. As to riots and tumults, let those answer for them, who, by wilful misrepresentations, endeavor to excite and promote them; or who seek to *stun* the sense of the nation, and to lose the great cause of public good in the outrages of a misinformed mob. We take our ground on principles that require no such riotous aid. We have nothing to apprehend from the poor; for we are pleading their cause. And we fear not proud oppression, for we have truth on our side.

We say, and we repeat it, that the French Revolution opens to the world an opportunity in which all good citizens must rejoice—that of promoting the general happiness of man. And that it moreover offers to this country in particular, an opportunity of reducing our enormous taxes.

These are our objects, and we will pursue them.

J. HORNE TOOKE,
Chairman.

ADDRESS TO THE PEOPLE OF FRANCE

At the same time that British royalty was persecuting Paine for having dared to expose the inequalities in English society as well as for his fervent defense of the French Revolution, the French nation hailed him as their

champion and claimed him for herself. On August 26, 1792, the French National Assembly voted the title of citizen to Paine, and during the first week of September he was elected to represent Calais, Oise, Somme, and Puy de Dôme in the National Assembly. The following *Address*, in acknowledgment of the honor of being made a citizen of France, was written by Paine on September 25, 1792.—*Editor*.

FELLOW CITIZENS, I receive, with affectionate gratitude, the honor which the late National Assembly has conferred upon me, by adopting me a citizen of France: and the additional honor of being elected by my fellow citizens a member of the National Convention. Happily impressed, as I am, by those testimonies of respect shown toward me as an individual, I feel my felicity increased by seeing the barrier broken down that divided patriotism by spots of earth, and limited citizenship to the soil, like vegetation. Had those honors been conferred in an hour of national tranquillity, they would have afforded no other means of showing my affection, than to have accepted and enjoyed them; but they come accompanied with circumstances that give me the honorable opportunity of commencing my citizenship in the stormy hour of difficulties. I come not to enjoy repose. Convinced that the cause of France is the cause of all mankind, and that liberty cannot be purchased by a wish, I gladly share with you the dangers and honors necessary to success.

I am well aware that the moment of any great change, such as that accomplished on the tenth of August,⁶ is unavoidably the moment of terror and confusion. The mind, highly agitated by hope, suspicion and apprehension, continues without rest till the change be accomplished. But let us now look calmly and confidently forward, and success is certain. It is no longer the paltry cause of kings, or of this, or of that individual, that calls France and her armies into action. It is the great cause of ALL. It is the establishment of a new era, that shall blot despotism from the earth, and fix, on the lasting principles of peace and citizenship, the great Republic of Man.

It has been my fate to have borne a share in the commencement and complete establishment of one revolution (I mean the Revolution of America). The success and events of that revolution are encouraging to us. The prosperity and happiness that have since flowed to that coun-

⁶ Paine is referring to the fact that on August 10, 1792 the Revolutionary Commune of Paris invaded the Tuileries and made the King prisoner.—*Editor*.

try, have amply rewarded her for all the hardships she endured and for all the dangers she encountered.

The principles on which that Revolution began, have extended themselves to Europe; and an overruling Providence is regenerating the old world by the principles of the new. The distance of America from all the other parts of the globe, did not admit of her carrying those principles beyond her own situation. It is to the peculiar honor of France, that she now raises the standard of liberty for all nations; and in fighting her own battles, contends for the rights of all mankind.

The same spirit of fortitude that insured success to America will insure it to France, for it is impossible to conquer a nation determined to be free! The military circumstances that now unite themselves to France are such as the despots of the earth know nothing of, and can form no calculation upon. They know not what it is to fight against a nation; they have only been accustomed to make war upon each other, and they know, from system and practise, how to calculate the probable success of despot against despot; and here their knowledge and their experience end.

But in a contest like the present a new and boundless variety of circumstances arise, that derange all such customary calculations. When a whole nation acts as an army, the despot knows not the extent of the power against which he contends. New armies arise against him with the necessity of the moment. It is then that the difficulties of an invading enemy multiply, as in the former case they diminished; and he finds them at their height when he expected them to end.

The only war that has any similarity of circumstances with the present, is the late Revolution War in America. On her part, as it now is in France, it was a war of the whole nation:—there it was that the enemy, by beginning to conquer, put himself in a condition of being conquered. His first victories prepared him for defeat. He advanced till he could not retreat, and found himself in the midst of a nation of armies.

Were it now to be proposed to the Austrians and Prussians, to escort them into the middle of France, and there leave them to make the most of such a situation, they would see too much into the dangers of it to accept the offer, and the same dangers would attend them, could they arrive there by any other means. Where, then, is the military policy of their attempting to obtain, by force, that which they would refuse by choice? But to reason with despots is throwing reason away. The best of arguments is a vigorous preparation.

Man is ever a stranger to the ways by which Providence regulates the order of things. The interference of foreign despots may serve to introduce into their own enslaved countries the principles they come to oppose. Liberty and equality are blessings too great to be the inheritance of France alone. It is an honor to her to be their first champion; and she may now say to her enemies, with a mighty voice, "O! ye Austrians, ye Prussians! ye who now turn your bayonets against us, it is for you, it is for all Europe, it is for all mankind, and not for France alone, that she raises the standard of Liberty and Equality!"

The public cause has hitherto suffered from the contradictions contained in the Constitution of the Constituent Assembly. Those contradictions have served to divide the opinions of individuals at home, and to obscure the great principles of the Revolution in other countries. But when those contradictions shall be removed, and the Constitution be made conformable to the Declaration of Rights; when the bagatelles of monarchy, royalty, regency and hereditary succession, shall be exposed, with all their absurdities, a new ray of light will be thrown over the world, and the Revolution will derive new strength by being universally understood.

The scene that now opens itself to France extends far beyond the boundaries of her own dominions. Every nation is becoming her colleague, and every court is become her enemy. It is now the cause of all nations, against the cause of all courts. The terror that despotism felt, clandestinely begot a confederation of despots; and their attack upon France was produced by their fears at home.

In entering on this great scene, greater than any nation has yet been called to act in let us say to the agitated mind, be calm. Let us punish by instructing, rather than by revenge. Let us begin the new era by a greatness of friendship, and hail the approach of union and success.

Your fellow-citizen,

THOMAS PAINE.