

# THOMAS PAINE, APOSTLE OF LIBERTY WITH TESTIMONY OF 500 WITNESSES

by John Eleazar Remsburg

*An Address, Chicago, January 29, 1916, and now a "rare book"*

*JACK MAKENS, TPF member in Fayetteville, Arkansas, sent this book and asks that the Bulletin try to make it widely known. (See Makens in vol. 15, no. 1, Spring 2014; and vol. 10, no. 1-2, Spring-Summer 2009.) Google designates it as "rare" because it is out of print, is contained only in research libraries, and is not circulated. Google Books offers it: <http://books.google.com> ; also, [http://books.google.com/books?id=7IFyFrwhre0C&source=gbs\\_slider\\_user\\_shelves\\_7\\_homepage](http://books.google.com/books?id=7IFyFrwhre0C&source=gbs_slider_user_shelves_7_homepage) . It is also at On Demand Books: <http://net.ondemandbooks.com/google/7IFyFrwhre0C> . Readers may contact Makens, at, [b4ethics@yahoo.com](mailto:b4ethics@yahoo.com) . He asks that many of us bring the book to the attention of media and academic- research circles by contacting writers and historians of our acquaintance.*

*Rensburg, says Makens, made sure of qualifications of his "witnesses" by careful choice: "who by intimate acquaintance, or careful study of his life, are qualified to give a just estimate of his character and works, --historians, biographers, encyclopedists, statesmen, divines, and others...." [Rensburg]*

## A Small Selection from 500 Witnesses

*(The first two were chosen for reprinting here by Jack Makens, the others were chosen by Martha Spiegelman)*

**JAMES MONROE:** The citizens of the United States cannot look back upon the times of their own Revolution without recollecting among the names of their most distinguished patriots that of Thomas Paine. The services he rendered to his country in its struggle for freedom have implanted in the hearts of his countrymen a sense of gratitude never to be effaced as long as they deserve the title of a just and generous people. The crime of ingratitude has not yet stained, and I trust never will stain our national character. You are considered by them as not only having rendered an important service in our Revolution, but as being on a more extensive scale, the friend of human rights, and a distinguished and able advocate in favor of public liberty."

**JAMES MADISON:** Whether a greater disposition to reward patriotic and distinguished efforts of genius will be found on any succeeding occasion, is not for me to predetermine. Should it finally appear that the merits of the man whose writings have so much contributed to infuse and foster the spirit of independence in the people of America, are unable to inspire them with a just beneficence, the world, it is to be feared, will give us as little credit for our policy as for our gratitude in this particular.

**MARQUIS DE LAFAYETTE:** To me America without her Thomas Paine is unthinkable.

**ELIZABETH CADY STANTON:** We cannot be too grateful to those who through poverty, persecution, imprisonment, and death have given us the light of science in the place of blind faith on questions of government, religion, and social life. Thomas Paine is a worthy name in the long line of martyrs to liberal political and religious principles.

**COLONEL ROBERT G. INGERSOLL:** If to love your fellow-men more than self is goodness, Thomas Paine was good. If to be in advance of your time, to be a pioneer in the direction of right is greatness, Thomas Paine was great. If to avow your principles and discharge your duty in the presence of death is heroic, Thomas Paine was a hero. He died in the land his genius defended, under the flag he gave to the skies. Slander cannot touch him now; hatred cannot reach him more.

**ABIGAIL ADAMS:** I am charmed with the sentiments of "Common Sense", and wonder how an honest heart, one who wishes the welfare of his country and the happiness of posterity, can hesitate one moment at adopting them. "Common Sense", like a ray of revelation, has come in season to clear our doubts and fix our choice.

**YOSHIRO OYAMA:** His unselfish devotion to the rights of man is now being recognized, and the brutal intolerance which tried to obliterate his name from history is rapidly disappearing.

**MRS. MARILLA M. RICKER:** Paine stands between two epochs: the epoch of Kings and the epoch of Man. To the King he said, "The night is coming"; to Man he said, "The day is dawning."

**EUGENE V. DEBS:** The revolutionary history of the United States and France stirred me deeply and its heroes and martyrs became my idols. Thomas Paine towered above them all.

**HARRIET LAW:** There are few to whom the world owes more, and probably none to whose memory it has been more ungrateful.

**CLARENCE DARROW:** Thomas Paine was so far beyond his age that a hundred years has not been long enough for the world to catch up. Sometime he will stand out as the wisest, truest, bravest friend of liberty that American can boast.

**MOHAMED ALI WEBB:** The intelligent Moslem places Thomas Paine among the world's admirable men and holds his memory in great reverence.

**PENNSYLVANIA ASSEMBLY:** Thomas Paine did, during the progress of the Revolution, voluntarily devote himself to the service of the public, without accepting recompense therefor, and, moreover, did decline taking or receiving the profits which authors are entitled to on the sale of their literary works, but relinquished them for the better accommodation of the country and the honor of the public cause.

**MANCHESTER CONSTITUTIONAL SOCIETY:** (England, 1792, re: *Rights of Man*) A work of the highest importance to every nation under heaven, but particularly to this, as excellent and practical plans for an immediate and considerable reduction of the public expenditure; for the prevention of wars; for the extension of our manufactures and commerce; for the education of the young; for the comfortable support of the aged; for the better maintenance of the poor.