



Common Sense for the Present

A modern outlook on Natural Rights modeled from Thomas Paine's original plea to the disjointed American Colonies.

"Both history and common sense light the path of that which should not be traveled, but we must *yield* to the wisdom of that light." – Chris Littleton

INTRODUCTION

This work is intended to be a reminder of the Natural Rights which served as the foundation for America's Birth and Independence.

Read it and think about why America has flourished.

Then, ask yourself – will we continue to flourish if we abandon these ideals?

If you enjoy the read, don't keep it at your home - pass it on to someone else!

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Enjoy!

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DEFINING A PROBLEM

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Perhaps the sentiments contained in the following pages, are not yet sufficiently fashionable to procure them general favour; a long habit of not thinking a thing wrong, gives it a superficial appearance of being right, and raises at first a formidable outcry in defense of "nuanced thought."

As the good people of this country will be grievously oppressed by a pending false security as proposed by the Left, they have an undoubted privilege to inquire into the pretensions, and equally to reject the summations of this falsehood.

The cause of these United States is in a great measure the cause of all mankind. Many circumstances have, and will arise, which are not local, but universal, and through which the principles of all Lovers of Mankind are affected. The laying a Country desolate with entitlement and oppression, declaring War against the natural rights of each citizen is the concern of every Man to whom Nature hath given the Power of feeling.

The Left of the political spectrum have so confounded society with government, as to leave little or no distinction between them. The truth is - they are not only different, but have different origins. Society is produced by our wants and government by our wickedness. The former promotes our happiness positively by uniting our affections, the latter negatively by restraining our vices. The one encourages intercourse, the other creates distinctions. The first is a patron, the last a punisher.

Society in every state is a blessing, but Government, even in its best state, is but a necessary evil; in its worst state an intolerable one. Were the impulses of societies conscience clear, uniform and irresistibly obeyed, man would need no other lawgiver. But, that not being the case, it is necessary to surrender up a part of property to furnish means for the protection of the rest; and this, simply because it is the lesser of two evils.

So, protection being the true design and end of government, it unanswerably follows that whatever form appears most likely to ensure it to us, with the least expense and greatest benefit, is preferable to all others. We choose government only because we must, not because we should. It is the lesser of two evils. Better to live with government contributing to a stable society, than live without in a state of anarchy.

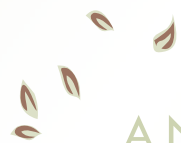
Government is namely, a mode rendered necessary by the inability of moral virtue to govern the world; here too is the design and end of government - freedom and protection. Nothing more and nothing less. And however our eyes may be dazzled with show from the Left, or our ears deceived by sound; or selfish interests darken our understanding, the simple voice of nature and reason will

say, it's right. Government's role is simply to protect the people who formed it, and allow for their freedom.

I draw my idea of the form of government from a principle in nature which no rhetoric can overturn - the more simple any thing is, the less likely to be disordered, and the easier repaired when disordered. With this truth in view, I offer a few remarks on the much boasted policies and proposals of the Left.

The proposed change to come from the current Left is exceedingly destructive. The nation will suffer for years without being able to discover in which part the fault lies; some will say in one and some in another, and every political physician will advise a different medicine.

I know it is difficult to get over long standing thoughts on taxation, and government assistance, yet if we allow ourselves to examine the component parts of the Lefts proposals, we shall find them to be the base remains of tyranny and oppression.



AN ENSLAVED SOCIETY

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Taxation is necessary to provide for the very basic responsibilities of a government, understood as acceptable, but only in moderation. The abuse of taxation was a primary concern to our founding fathers, leading to the central tenant of our Declaration of Independence - protection of our inborn rights - or as they called them: Life, Liberty and the Pursuit of Happiness. Abuse of taxation does not allow for these inborn rights. It oppresses them.

“We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the Pursuit of Happiness. That to secure these rights, Governments are instituted among Men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed.” - Declaration of Independence

Taxation has become a means for developing the programs that create a debtor system between society and government. This does not secure the rights of men.

Think of a debt owed. Who has the power? Health insurance as provided under government places each person in debt to the government, granting that government the ability to dictate behavior. This results in a loss of freedom, or, should this vocabulary be preferred, an increase in oppression.

We have allowed exactly what our founding fathers fought to destroy - a government, in control, with few checks or balances from the people whose freedoms it should be, by inborn right to strengthen. Each additional tax provides finances to mandate programs which create debtors to the government.

I propose that we have been in a flailing state of partial socialism under which each American is in debt to the government to some degree. That degree of indebtedness, and therefore governmental control, is only lessened by the accumulation of personal wealth.

It is clear that the development and growth of government programs and departments creates the necessity for increased taxation, but without this development and growth of government, there would be no need for increased taxation. And, without the burden of taxation, Americans would be free to accumulate wealth necessary to pursuing long term personal security in healthcare, retirement, etc. In short, taxation removes from Americans the means to strengthen their freedom, and preserve our unalienable rights of Life, Liberty and the Pursuit of Happiness.

Income Tax, Social Security Tax and Medicare Tax in the United States have made us debtor to the government, granting them control of our future and

freedom. This is in clear opposition to the original reason we declared our independence.

Income tax has provided the means for, in many occasions, unelected officials to set policy for our daily lives in education, economy, etc. We have given the decision making power for our futures to the government. When has a stranger ever known what is best for you or your family?

Social Security has developed the idea that we should look to our government to secure our retirement and future as we age. It has created a dependency on government to make choices for our future. If we depend on government to secure our retirement, what happens when changes in population, income or economy affect the government's ability to provide for that future?

Taxes under the Left will fund a form of government managed healthcare. Health Insurance is not a right, and it certainly was never part of our original government. For government to provide health insurance to every person, it only weakens the desire of every person to provide for themselves and their family. It promotes a culture of dependence on government and strengthens the control of government on the people. A debtor system is further developed.



THE PURSUIT OF
HAPPINESS

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There is not a single mention in the Declaration of Independence or original Constitution of any form of government assistance or need based program.

Our founding fathers believed that all a person needed was the unfettered ability to chase their dreams, work for their family and build a life. The real American spirit of innovation, Westward expansion and independent thinking did not revolve around how government could assist them. It revolved around how government could stay out of their way.

They believed that the strength and desire of a free man, left alone, could rise above any circumstance, overcome any tribulation and battle against all odds to pursue happiness. This was the story of the American Revolution. A down trodden, underfunded, under developed people willed their freedom from tyranny.

This precious belief is in direct conflict with a government who would seek to indebt massive numbers of people by giving them what they need to survive - whether that be food, shelter or income.



EQUALITY VS. LIBERTY

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The current proposals of the Left are at direct odds with the foundation of America's greatness. They wish to forcibly take from one man, and give to another. Again, this is in direct conflict with the intentions of our founding fathers and more importantly - it is completely against the spirit of America's greatness, which is the idea of finding your own way without government intervention.

It is also in opposition to the idea that a man should earn greatness and respect, not be born into it, or have it given to him. We did not form a monarchy for this reason. We believe that all men are born equal. But, please take very special note that creating equality is not the job of government. Men earn their equality with other men. That equality is not defined by money, title or family. It is defined by character and accomplishment. This is the American ideal - born equal with no man writing the future. Government should not, and cannot, write our future.

What will happen when one man, who has earned a place in life, is forcibly taken from that place by government who would like to artificially create a place for another man not willing to create a place for himself. Will that man, from whom his place was taken, respond by doubling his work to support the second man? Or, will he lessen his work to prevent his place from being taken by this man?

Common sense knows the latter to be true. If a government punishes one man for positive behavior, he will alter that behavior. If a government rewards a man for negative behavior, he will continue that behavior. We cannot punish success and reward failure. This policy does not work in any other part of life. Why would it work in this?

Government's role in setting fiscal policy must be to create circumstances which encourage the poor to become rich, not the rich to become poor. The second only leads both parties to lessened productivity affecting everyone around them negatively.

If both men lose the desire to work (for separate motivations), the government has lost the means by which it hoped to take from one man and build up the other. In effect, they have destroyed the will and productivity of both men. Who have we served better?

The Left proposes to forcefully take what is necessary to increase the debtors' enslavement to government. When government has taken these freedoms from each man, what will be left of the American dream? Would you work as hard as possible for 10 people you have never met, and have chosen not to work as hard as you?

Is that allowing for Life, Liberty or the Pursuit of Happiness?



THE AMERICAN DREAM

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But government exists to provide for the well being of all, says the Left. Then the more shame upon their conduct. Even brutes do not devour their young, nor savages make war upon their families. The people of our country, not a governmental system made America great. This new World has been the asylum for the persecuted lovers of civil and religious liberty from every part of the world. Here have they come, not from the tender embraces of the mother, but from the cruelty of their government - that the same tyranny which drove the first emigrants from home, pursues their descendants still.

People from every corner of the globe beg to enter our country, not because we will provide for their every need once in our borders. But, more simply because we won't.

The American dream is going from rags to riches on your own terms - not on the government's. If we create an environment which destroys this dream, we will cease to attract the best, brightest and most ambitious people in the world.

If a complete dependence on a government was the desire of mankind, we would have seen emigrants begging to enter the former Soviet Union. Instead, we saw the opposite. People fled the security of a governmental blanket to brave the shores of America without a guarantee. They banked on themselves and freedom from oppression to pursue their dreams.

Why is the Left insistent on crushing this dream? Providing a security blanket will not inspire anyone to dream. It can only act as bare necessities in a famine of hope. This famine of hope or lack of desire only grows when the incentive to dream is removed from the great equation of life. Is it not better to feed the dream by providing incentives than removing them?

Though I would carefully avoid giving unnecessary offense, yet I am inclined to believe, that all those who espouse the doctrine of equality, may be included within the following descriptions. Interested men, who are not to be trusted, weak men who cannot see, prejudiced men who will not see, and a certain set of moderate men who think better of the European world than it deserves; and this last class, by an ill-judged deliberation, will be the cause of more calamities to this country than all the other three.

The uniqueness of America is not in the belief that all men should be equal, it is in the idea that all men are born equal. A man earns his equality, superiority or even disparity by his actions. But, his actions, and his actions alone determine this status.

As such, much of Europe's recent socialist democracies were formed under the guise of an egalitarian mindset. By contrast, America has developed into a

society formed by merit and accomplishment. Europe seeks the means to make most of the population acceptably mediocre. America gives most of the population an opportunity to become great. Once again, if our country's focus becomes making the society equal, we will lose all that made us great.

The Left must have an America which shuns greatness in order to have the conditions necessary to accept redistribution of wealth as the norm. If we shun greatness, we cease to become America and are transformed into a lesser nation.



COMPROMISING RIGHTS

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Men of temperance look somewhat lightly over the proposals of the Left, and, still hoping for the best, are apt to call out, Come, come, we shall be friends again for all this. But examine the passions and feelings of mankind: bring the doctrine of reconciliation to the touchstone of nature, and then tell me whether you can hereafter love, honour, and faithfully serve the government which has robbed its people?

If you cannot do this, then are you only deceiving yourselves, and by your delay bringing ruin upon posterity.

Your future connection will be forced and unnatural, and being formed only on the plan of present convenience, will in a little time fall into a relapse more wretched than before.

But if you say, you can still pass the violations over, then I ask, has your house been effected? Has your property been lessened before your face? Are your wife and children's happiness compromised? If you have not, then are you not a judge of those who have. But if you have, and can still shake hands with those who took from you, then are you unworthy the name of husband, father, friend or lover, and whatever may be your rank or title in life, you have the heart of a coward.

This is not inflaming or exaggerating matters, but trying them by those feelings and affections which nature justifies, and without which, we should be incapable of discharging the social duties of life, or enjoying the felicities of it.

I mean not to exhibit horror, but to awaken us from fatal and unmanly slumbers, that we may pursue determinately some fixed object. It is not in the power of anyone in the world to conquer America, if she do not conquer herself by delay and timidity.



LOGIC AND CLARITY

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The present winter is worth an age if rightly employed, but if lost or neglected, the whole world will partake of the misfortune; and there is no punishment which that man will not deserve, be he who, or what, or where he will, that may be the means of sacrificing a season so precious and useful. Now is the time to protect what we have built!

It is repugnant to reason, to the universal order of things to all examples from former ages, to suppose, that this country can entertain the idea of reversing everything we have held dear for over 230 years. The utmost stretch of human wisdom cannot, at this time, compass a plan short of stubborn resistance to this proposed fundamental change to our great experiment.

Every simple appeal to logic has been ineffectual. Our evidence in our own history has been rejected with disdain; and only tended to convince us, that nothing flatters vanity, or confirms obstinacy in the Left more than our inability to clearly convey our message. Wherefore, since nothing but blows will do, for God's sake, let us speak clearly without any form of political correctness, and not abandon the next generation to be without hope of any kind.

To say, they will never attempt it again is idle and visionary, we thought so at the repeal of the policies from the Johnson through Carter years, yet just a single generation and single significant economic downturn later, here we are again fighting for the survival of the American dream. How can we not see what will surely destroy us? ***Both history and common sense light the path of that which should not be traveled, but we must yield to the wisdom of that light.***

Again to present matters, it is not in the power of the Left to do this country justice: The business of it is already too weighty, and intricate, to be managed with any tolerable degree of convenience, by a man, so very ignorant of us; for if he succeeds, he cannot govern us. To be always running an agenda of wealth re-distribution and false equality will in a few years be looked upon as folly and childishness. There is no time when it is proper, and this is the proper time for it to cease.

Citizens not physically or mentally capable of providing for themselves are the proper objects to take under care; but there is something very absurd, in supposing a country to be perpetually provided for by any man or government. In no instance hath nature made the satellite larger than its primary planet, and as in the government and American people, with respect to each other, reverses the common order of nature - it is evident this is wrong. The government should never provide for its people.

I am not induced by motives of pride, party, or resentment to espouse this doctrine of independence from governmental control and servitude; I am

clearly, positively, and conscientiously persuaded that it is the true interest of this country to be so; that everything short of that is mere patchwork, that it can afford no lasting felicity, that it is leaving the burden to our children, and shrinking back at a time, when, a little more, a little farther, would have rendered this country the glory of many more generations.



THE LEFT AND
WHAT SHALL COME

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As I have always considered the re-emergence of this country as an event, which sooner or later must arrive, so from the late rapid progress of the country to maturity, the event must not be far off. Wherefore, on the breaking out of these debates, it was not worth the while to have disputed a matter, which time would have finally redressed, unless we meant to be in earnest; otherwise, it is like wasting an estate on a suit at law, to regulate the trespasses of a tenant, whose lease is just expiring.

No man was a warmer wisher for reconciliation than myself, before the simple eloquence, yet destructive rhetoric of the Left, but the moment the wolf in sheep's clothing was made known, I rejected the hardened, sullen tempered leader of change forever; and disdain the wretch, that with the pretended title of savior of our nation, can unfeelingly hear of their slaughter, and composedly sleep with their blood upon his soul.

But admitting that matters were now made up, what would be the event? I answer, the ruin of this nation. And that for several reasons:

1. The powers of governing still remain in the hands of the elected. If of the Left, they will have a negative over the whole legislation of this country. And the Left hath shewn themselves such an inveterate enemy to liberty, and discovered such a thirst for false equality; are they, or are they not, proper to say to this nation, You shall make no laws unless I deem appropriate to advance the cause of manufactured equality.

And is there any inhabitant in America so ignorant, as not to know, that according to what we can call, the Left's control of each branch of government, that this country will make no laws but what the leader of this Left gives it leave to; and is there any man so unwise, as not to see, that (considering what has happened) he will suffer no law to be made here, but such as suit his purpose. We may be as effectually enslaved by the want of laws in America, as by submitting to laws made for us before our independence.

After matters are made up (as it is called) can there be any doubt, but the whole power of the elected will be exerted, to keep this country as low and humble as possible? Instead of going forward we shall go backward, or be perpetually quarrelling or ridiculously petitioning. We are already greater than the Left wishes us to be, and will they not hereafter endeavour to make us less?

To bring the matter to one point. Is the power who does not believe in our prosperity, a proper power to govern us? Whoever says No to this question understands this common sense, for the greatness of America means no more, than, whether we shall make our own laws, or, whether the Left, the greatest

enemy of this American ideal, shall tell us, You shall make no laws unless I deem appropriate to advance the cause of manufactured equality.

America is only a secondary object in the system of manufactured equality, the Left consults the good of this country no farther than it answers their own purpose. Wherefore, their own interest leads to suppress the growth of our country in every case which doth not promote their advantage, or in the least interferes with it. A pretty state we should soon be in under such a second-hand government, considering what has happened!

Men do not change from enemies to friends by simple rhetoric: And in order to shew that reconciliation now is a dangerous doctrine, I affirm, that THEY MAY ACCOMPLISH BY CRAFT AND SUBTILITY, IN THE LONG RUN, WHAT THEY CANNOT DO BY FORCE AND VIOLENCE IN THE SHORT ONE. Reconciliation and ruin are nearly related.

2. That as even the best terms, which we can expect to obtain, can amount to no more than a temporary expedient, or a kind of government by guardianship, which can last no longer than till the country understands this mistake, so the general face and state of things, in the interim, will be unsettled and unpromising.

Emigrants will not choose to come to a country whose form of government hangs but by a thread, and who is every day tottering on the brink of commotion and disturbance; and numbers of the present inhabitants would lay hold of the interval, to dispose of their effects, and leave this country.

But the most powerful of all arguments, is, that nothing but protection from mandated equality and wealth re-distribution, can preserve the future of our nation. I dread the event of a reconciliation with the Left now, as it is more than probable, that it will be followed by an absolute destruction of everything we know to be America.

Many around the world are already ruined by the Lefts doctrines of mandated equality and wealth re-distribution; (millions more would suffer the same fate in this country.) The general temper of the America, towards a false equality, will be like that of a youth, who is nearly out of his time; they will care very little about the country.

And a government which cannot support liberty is no government at all, and in that case we pay our money for nothing; and pray what is it that the government can do, whose power will be wholly on paper, should a civil tumult break out after these egalitarian policies take effect?

I have heard some men say, many of whom I believe spoke without thinking, that they dreaded a re-emergence of Americas greatness, fearing that it would lower other nations opinion of us. It is but seldom that our first thoughts are truly

correct, and that is the case here; for there are ten times more to dread from a patched up, dying nation than from a true re-emergence.

I make the sufferers case my own, and I protest, that were I driven from house and home, my property lessened, and my circumstances ruined, that as a man, sensible of injuries, I could never relish the doctrines of mandated equality and wealth re-distribution.

I offer the following extracts from that wise observer on governments - Dragonetti. "The science" says he of the politician, "consists in fixing the true point of happiness and freedom. Those men would deserve the gratitude of ages, who should discover a mode of government that contained the greatest sum of individual happiness, with the least national expense." - Dragonetti on virtue and rewards.



THE MOMENT

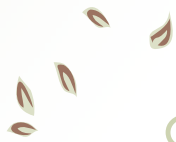
THE MOMENT

O ye that love mankind! Ye that dare oppose, not only these dangerous proposals, but the proposers themselves, stand forth! Every spot of Europe is overrun with oppression. Freedom hath been hunted round the globe. Asia, and Africa, have long expelled her. Europe regards her like a stranger, and the Left hath given her warning to depart in this country. O! Receive the fugitive, and prepare in time an asylum for mankind.

The present is that peculiar time which rarely happens to a nation - the time she has a chance to re-define herself. Most nations have let slip the opportunity, and by that means have been compelled to receive laws from their governments which perpetuate control and oppress freedom, instead of making laws which encourage liberties.

First, they had a king, and then a form of government; whereas the articles or charter of government should be formed first, and men delegated to execute them afterwards; but from the errors of other nations let us learn wisdom, and lay hold of the present opportunity - to re-build this government in the right way.

Immediate necessity makes many things convenient, which if continued would grow into oppressions. Expedience and right are different things. When the calamities of America required a consultation, there was no method so ready, or at that time so proper, as to appoint persons whose chief purpose is to protect each American from its government - not create a government to provide for each American; and the wisdom with which they should proceed would preserve this country from ruin.



COMMON SENSE

COMMON SENSE

To CONCLUDE, however strange it may appear to some, or however unwilling they may be to think so, matters not, but many strong and striking reasons may be given to show that nothing can settle our affairs so expeditiously as an open and determined re-emergence of America in the form our founding fathers intended. Some of these common sense ideas are,

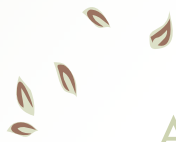
1. Government only exists out of necessity. As a rule, it does not contribute to individual happiness since it is effectively designed to control and restrict. In short, government naturally resists liberties.
2. Taxation reduces personal wealth. A reduction in personal wealth inhibits each American's Life, Liberty and the Pursuit of Happiness.
3. If the Left puts a tax system in place which punishes productivity and rewards a lack of productivity, no one benefits. Re-distribution of wealth as currently proposed will do just this. Who will be left with incentive to work?
4. Increased taxation will allow for creation of monstrous programs designed for people to rely on government in every part of their life. The more you take from a government, the more you are controlled by them. For if they control the means to your well-being - you are in their debt and effectively oppressed.
5. If the government controls a significant portion of the population by giving them healthcare, retirement, etc, that significant portion of the population will most likely never move to change this system locking our country into higher taxes, lowered freedoms and an extremely powerful government capable of dictating our lives into the future.
6. These fundamental changes, proposed by the Left, increase government influence and a reduction in personal liberty. This is not how America has succeeded to this point.
7. The Left proposes to manufacture equality, rather than rely on each man to choose his own path letting character and accomplishment define the man. This false security only looks good, but will surely destroy the heart of the American spirit and collapse of the American Dream. The uniqueness of America is not in the belief that all men should be equal, it is in the idea that all men are born equal. A man earns his equality, superiority or even disparity by his actions.
8. The great American story has been written by freedom from controls as the founding fathers understood. Increasing government control takes us to the exact place from which Americans revolted to gain our independence. We want to be free to make our own decisions, not held hostage by government from living our lives. Freedom from government is America!

9. Review history to see how these socialistic programs affected each nation that embraced them. With each review, you will find nations stagnant, dying or dead. At no point in history has a controlling government advanced the happiness of its people.

On these grounds I rest the matter. And as no offer hath yet been made to refute the doctrine contained within, it is a negative proof, that either the doctrine cannot be refuted, or, that the party in favor of it are too numerous to be opposed.

WHEREFORE, instead of gazing at each other with suspicious or doubtful curiosity, let each of us hold out to his neighbor the hearty hand of friendship, and unite in drawing a line, which, like an act of oblivion, shall bury in forgetfulness every former dissension.

Let the names of Republican and Democrat be extinct; and let none other be heard among us, than those of a good citizen, an open and resolute friend, and a virtuous supporter of the RIGHTS of MANKIND, and of the FREE AND UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.



ABOUT THIS WORK

ABOUT THIS WORK

Who Distributed This?

American Junto: www.americanjunto.org

Our organization seeks to develop ideology and methods for change which focus on mankind's right to Life, Liberty and the Pursuit of Happiness - the great common denominator of every American - rights we fear are currently eroding in the name of progress.

If you would like copies of this publication, please contact:
publisher@americanjunto.org

Who is the Author?

A combination of Thomas Paine and Chris Littleton, member of the American Junto

P.S. - Yes, *Common Sense* was altered, edited, added to and taken from. I'm not trying to pass this all off as my own. But, it's shocking when you substitute the Left for England how often things turn out to be true, hence the inspiration to use Thomas Paine. Why would we choose to go back to this?

- Chris Littleton, clittleton@americanjunto.org

...Is a 30 year old, middle class male, who lives in a Cincinnati suburb called West Chester. I graduated from Ohio University, and have a beautiful wife and 2 children.

I pay a mortgage and work 50+ hours each week, with frequent travel and time away from my family. Just a regular guy.

I am not a professional writer, so pardon any errors.

Why was this written?

I truly feel like I am an average American trying to pursue the American dream. I feel hard work and creativity will pay off, and just want government to stay out of my way.

My friends and I (who started American Junto) talk about these concepts all the time, so I thought I would allow Thomas Paine to help me describe what we think. He is far more eloquent than I could ever be.

I was shocked how much *Common Sense*, confronting a tyranny in England, mirrored the future under an administration governed from the Left. It's always good to look at the thoughts that lead us to emerge as a nation the first time. When something works, why change it?

I am truly concerned about America voting a people into office who clearly promotes socialist tenants.

I'm scared what America will mean to my children in 20 years because I want them to have a chance at pursuing the American dream, but fear it may not be possible.

I am shocked at the pure ignorance of most people voting for candidates of the Left. They have not bothered to follow proposals to their logical conclusion, and have been taken in by flowery rhetoric.

And - I don't have time to get formally involved with the campaign process, so this is my only contribution.

Hope you enjoyed!