

A Letter to Russia . . .

THE FOURTH TRUTH

(Thirteenth of a series) themselves — so they could give them to my generation of Americans.

Dear Ivan:
After listing the truths of the equality of the gift of life to man and the rights endowed in him by his Creator, the Declaration of Independence majestically states the Fourth Truth:

"That, to secure these Rights, Governments are instituted among Men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed."

In other words, Ivan, to enjoy the rights bestowed by God, men must have the courage and the determination to assert them and to institute a self-government, operated by themselves, to secure those rights for their children.

There is nothing given to man by the Creator except the gift of life. Man is born naked. He, alone of God's creatures, is completely helpless at birth.

What man does with that gift of life is up to him, to his own capacity to develop physically and mentally, to his own capacity to develop and, to his courage and determination to better himself and his own.

The fruit of the tree hangs upon the limb. It does not spring from that limb into our mouths. We must reach up, pluck it, and put it into our mouths if we wish to eat it.

In much the same way, the men of 1776-1783 reached out and took the rights bestowed upon them. Through the trial and error of the Articles of Confederation they developed the Constitution and its Bill of Rights to secure those rights for their children.

Not one of those rights or documents was given to the men of 1776-1783. They took their rights and they created and developed those historic documents of themselves, by themselves, for

As a young man, nearing his 29th birthday, Abraham Lincoln observed that his generation had toiled not for their blessings of freedom, but that they had been given to them.

Young Mr. Lincoln said that each successive generation of Americans holds the chalice of the sum of all American freedoms which were won and established through the sacrifices of previous generations, and that it is the National Interest to preserve those freedoms to pass on to the next generation.

The preservation of our freedoms against each challenge, said Mr. Lincoln, is a task of:

- gratitude to our fathers
- justice to ourselves
- duty to posterity, and
- love of our fellow men, which includes you, Ivan.

We must, as Mr. Lincoln said in 1838, transmit our American freedoms to the "latest generation that fate shall permit the world to know."

To do this, we must win the war of ideas in which we are now engaged, for the world — as Mr. Lincoln said of the U.S. in 1958 — must eventually become all slave or all free. Which do you want, Ivan?

Your friend,
Tom Torrance



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