

Listen America (1980), Jerry Falwell

The Reverend Jerry Falwell founded the Moral Majority in 1979 to counter what he considered to be both the creeping socialism of the welfare state and the moral decline evidenced in the excesses of the youth revolt. Americans, he insisted, "are s and tired of the way amoral liberals are trying to corrupt our nation." Coupling fundamentalist Christianity with conservative Republicanism, the Moral Majority emerged as a major political and social force in the 1980s—and a major ally of Ronald Reagan.

We must reverse the trend America finds herself in today. Young people between the ages of twenty-five and forty have been born and reared in a different world than Americans of years past. The television set has been their primary baby-sitter. From the television set they have learned situation ethics and immorality—they have learned a loss of respect for human life. They have learned to disrespect the family as God has established it. They have been educated in a public-school system that is permeated with secular humanism. They have been taught that the Bible is just another book of literature. They have been taught that there are no absolutes in our world today. They have been introduced to the drug culture. They have been reared by the family and the public school in a society that is greatly void of discipline and character-building. These same young people have been reared under the influence of a government that has taught them socialism and welfarism. They have been taught to believe that the world owes them a living whether they work or not.

I believe that America was built on integrity, on faith in God, and on hard work. I do not believe that anyone has ever been successful in life without being willing to add that last ingredient—diligence or hard work. We now have second-and third-generation welfare recipients. Welfare is not always wrong. There are those who do need welfare, but we have reared a generation that understands neither the dignity nor the importance of work.

Every American who looks at the facts must share a deep concern and burden for our country. We are not unduly concerned when we say that there are some very dark clouds on America's horizon. I am not a pessimist, but it is indeed a time for truth. If Americans will face the truth, our nation can be turned around and can be saved from the evils and the destruction that have fallen upon every other nation that has turned its back on God.

There is no excuse for what is happening in our country. We must, from the highest office in the land right down to the shoe shine boy in the airport, have a return to biblical basics. If the Congress of our United States will take its stand on that which is right and wrong, and if our President, our judiciary system, and our state and local leaders will take their stand on holy living, we can turn this country around.

I personally feel that the home and the family are still held in reverence by the vast majority of the American public. I believe there is still a vast number of Americans who love their country, are patriotic, and are willing to sacrifice for her. I remember the time when it was positive to be patriotic, and as far as I am concerned, it still is. I remember as a boy, when the flag was raised, everyone stood proudly and put his hand upon his heart and pledged allegiance with gratitude. I remember when the band struck up "The Stars and Stripes Forever," we stood and goose pimples would run all over me. I remember when I was in elementary school during World War II, when every report from the other shores meant something to us. We were not out demonstrating against our boys who were dying in Europe and Asia. We were praying for them and thanking God for them and buying war bonds to help pay for the materials and artillery they needed to fight and win and come back.

I believe that Americans want to see this country come back to basics, back to values, back to biblical morality, back to sensibility, and back to patriotism. Americans are looking for leadership and guidance. It is fair to ask the question, "If 84 per cent of the American people still believe in morality, why is America having such internal problems?" We must look for the answer to the highest places in every level of government. We have a lack of leadership in America. But Americans have been lax in voting in and out of office the right and the wrong people. My responsibility as a preacher of the Gospel is one of influence, not of control, and that is the responsibility of each individual citizen. Through the ballot box Americans must provide for strong moral leadership at every level. If our country will get back on the track in sensibility and moral sanity, the crises that I have herein mentioned will work out in the course of time and with God's blessings.

It is now time to take a stand on certain moral issues, and we can only stand if we have leaders. We must stand against the Equal Rights Amendment, the feminist revolution, and the homosexual revolution. We must have a revival in this country. . . .

As a preacher of the Gospel, I not only believe in prayer and preaching, I also believe in good citizenship. If a labor union in America has the right to organize and improve its working conditions, then I believe that the churches and the pastors, the priests, and the rabbis of America have a responsibility, not just the right, to see to it that the moral climate and conscience of Americans is such that this nation can be healed inwardly. If it is healed inwardly, then it will heal itself outwardly. . . .

Americans have been silent much too long. We have stood by and watched as American power and influence have been systematically weakened in every sphere of the world.

We are not a perfect nation, but we are still a free nation because we have the blessing of God upon us. We must continue to follow in a path that will ensure that blessing. . . .

Let us never forget that as our Constitution declares, we are endowed by our Creator with certain inalienable rights. It is only as we abide by those laws established by our Creator that He will continue to bless us with these rights. We are endowed our rights to freedom and liberty and the pursuit of happiness by the God who created man to be free and equal.

The hope of reversing the trends of decay in our republic now lies with the Christian public in America. We cannot expect help from the liberals. They certainly are not going to call our nation back to righteousness and neither are the pornographers, the smut peddlers, and those who are corrupting our youth. Moral Americans must be willing to put their reputations, their fortunes, and their very lives on the line for this great nation of ours. Would that we had the courage of our forefathers who knew the great responsibility that freedom carries with it. . . .

Our Founding Fathers separated church and state in function, but never intended to establish a government void of God. As is evidenced by our Constitution, good people in America must exert an influence and provide a conscience and climate of morality in which it is difficult to go wrong, not difficult for people to go right in America.

I am positive in my belief regarding the Constitution that God led in the development of that document, and as a result, we here in America have enjoyed 204 years of unparalleled freedom. The most positive people in the world are people who believe the Bible to be the Word of God. The Bible contains a positive message. It is a message written by 40 men over a period of approximately 1,500 years under divine inspiration. It is God's message of love, redemption, and deliverance for a fallen race. What could be more positive than the message of redemption in the Bible? But God will force Himself upon no man. Each individual American must make His choice. . . .

Americans must no longer linger in ignorance and apathy. We cannot be silent about the sins that are destroying this nation. The choice is ours. We must turn America around or prepare for inevitable destruction. I am listening to the sounds that threaten to take away our liberties in America. And I have listened to God's admonitions and His direction—the only hopes of saving America. Are you listening too?

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[...] It seems to me that there are three distinct stages in our Imperial history. We began to be, and we ultimately became a great Imperial power in the eighteenth century, but, during the greater part of that time, the colonies were regarded, not only by us, but by every European power that possessed them, as possessions valuable in proportion to the pecuniary advantage which they brought to the mother country, which, under that order of ideas, was not truly a mother at all, but appeared rather in the light of a grasping and absentee landlord desiring to take from his tenants the utmost rents he could exact. The colonies were valued and maintained because it was thought that they would be a source of profit — of direct profit — to the mother country.

That was the first stage, and when we were rudely awakened by the War of Independence in America from this dream that the colonies could be held for our profit alone, the second chapter was entered upon, and public opinion seems then to have drifted to the opposite extreme; and, because the colonies were no longer a source of revenue, it seems to have been believed and argued by many people that their separation from us was only a matter of time, and that that separation should be desired and encouraged lest haply they might prove an encumbrance and a source of weakness.

[...] We have now reached the third stage in our history, and the true conception of our Empire.

What is that conception? As regards the self-governing colonies we no longer talk of them as dependencies. The sense of possession has given place to the sentiment of kinship. We think and speak of them as part of ourselves, as part of the British Empire, united to us, although they may be dispersed throughout the world, by ties of kindred, of religion, of history, and of language, and joined to us by the seas that formerly seemed to divide us.

But the British Empire is not confined to the self-governing colonies and the United Kingdom. It includes a much greater area, a much more numerous population in tropical climes, where no considerable European settlement is possible, and where the native population must always vastly outnumber the white inhabitants; and in these cases also the same change has come over the Imperial idea. Here also the sense of possession has given place to a different sentiment — the sense of obligation. We feel now that our rule over these territories can only be justified if we can show that it adds to the happiness and prosperity of the people, and I maintain that our rule does, and has, brought security and I maintain that our rule does, and has, brought security and peace and comparative prosperity to countries that never knew these blessings before.

In carrying out this work of civilization we are fulfilling what I believe to be our national mission, and we are finding scope for the exercise of these faculties and qualities which have made of us a great governing race. I do not say that our success has been perfect in every case, I do not say that all our methods have been beyond reproach; but I do say that in almost every instance in which the rule of the Queen has been established and the great *Pax Britannica* has been enforced, there has come with it greater security to life and property, and a material improvement in the condition of the bulk of the population. No doubt, in the first instance, when these conquests have been made, there has been bloodshed, there has been loss of life among the native populations, loss of still more precious lives among those who have been sent out to bring these countries into some kind of disciplined order, but it must be remembered that that is the condition of the mission we have to fulfil. [...]

You cannot have omelettes without breaking eggs; you cannot destroy the practices of barbarism, of slavery, of superstition, which for centuries have desolated the interior of Africa, without the use of force; but if you will fairly contrast the gain to humanity with the price which we are bound to pay for it, I think you may well rejoice in the result of such expeditions as those which have been recently conducted with such signal success in Nyasaland, Ashanti, Benin, and Nupé — expeditions which may have, and indeed have, cost valuable lives, but as to which we may rest assured that for one life lost a hundred will be gained, and the cause of civilization and the prosperity of the people will in the long run be eminently advanced. But no doubt such a state of things, such a mission as I have described, involves heavy responsibility. In the wide dominions of the Queen the doors of the temple of Janus are never closed, and it is a gigantic task that we have undertaken when we have

determined to wield the sceptre of empire. Great is the task, great is the responsibility, but great is the honour; and I am convinced that the conscience and the spirit of the country will rise to the height of its obligations, and that we shall have the strength to fulfil the mission which our history and our national character have imposed upon us.

HOW TO WOO THE MIDDLE CLASSES

1 [...] The Conservative Party today has problems not because our analysis has be wrong
2 or our principles faulty. Our difficulties are due to the fact that, in certain limited but
3 important respects, our policies and performance have not lived up our analysis and
4 principles. That is why the current idea, put around by some malcontents, that the
5 Conservative Party is in trouble because it has moved to the Right, and that this is what needs
6 to be remedied, is boloney—and Dennis might be able to suggest a more telling description.

7 The test is simple. Just ask yourself: is it because the Government has not spent,
8 borrowed and taxed enough that people are discontented? Or is it that we have gone too far
9 towards increasing government spending, borrowing and taxation?

10 The answer is obvious. We are unpopular, above all, because the middle classes—and
11 all those who aspire to join the middle classes—feel that they no longer have the incentives
12 and opportunities they expect from a Conservative government.

13 I am not sure what is meant by those who say that the party should return to something
14 called "One Nation Conservatism". As far as I can tell by their views on European federalism,
15 such people's creed would be better described as "No Nation Conservatism".

16 And certainly anyone who believes that salvation is to be found further away from the
17 basic Conservative principles which prevailed in the 1980s—small government, a property-
18 owning democracy, tax cuts, deregulation and national sovereignty – is profoundly mistaken.

19 That mistake in most cases has its origins in the acceptance of the picture of the 1980s
20 which has been painted by the critics. That decade changed the direction of Britain to such an
21 extent that it is unlikely that even a Labour government would altogether reverse it—try as
22 they might.

23 Inflation was brought down, without the use of the prices and income controls which the
24 great and the good all agreed were indispensable. Public spending as a share of GDP fell,
25 which allowed tax rates to be cut. Government borrowing was reduced and we repaid debt.

26 Reform of the public finances was matched by reform of the trade unions, deregulation
27 and privatisation of industries and a great extension of ownership of houses, shares and
28 savings—quite a lot of "stakeholding" in fact... The economic growth and the improvement
29 of living standards which resulted from these reforms were so great that for a time
30 materialism, rather than poverty, became the main accusation against us.

31 "Hunting the yuppie" became the favourite sport of the neo-puritan, liverish Left. But,
32 of course, the reality was that the success which free enterprise brought over those years was
33 not just expressed in conspicuous consumption—though what would we give for a few more
34 of those yuppies today! The message from all this is not that everything in the 1980s was
35 perfect or that everything that has followed it in the 1990s has been bad. Every Prime Minister
36 has his—and her—regrets.

37 The important message, rather, is that in Britain we have seen from the 1980s what
38 works—just as we saw in the 1970s what did not. And what works here, as elsewhere, is free
39 enterprise and not big government. So it would make no economic sense at all for us to move
40 closer to the policies of our opponents. And trying to move towards the centre ground makes
41 no political sense either. As Keith used to remind us, it is not the centre ground but the
42 common ground—the shared instincts and traditions of the British people—on which we
43 should pitch our tents. That ground is solid—whereas the centre ground is as slippery as the
44 spin doctors who have colonised it. [...]

**Lady Margaret THATCHER, Extracts from the First Keith Joseph Memorial
Lecture, *The Daily Telegraph*, 12 January 1996.**

STATEMENT AND PROCLAMATION OF GOVERNOR GEORGE C. WALLACE
UNIVERSITY OF ALABAMA
June 11, 1963

As Governor and Chief Magistrate of the State of Alabama I deem it to be my solemn obligation and duty to stand before you representing the rights and sovereignty of this State and its peoples. The unwelcomed, unwanted, unwarranted and force-induced intrusion upon the campus of the University of Alabama today of the might of the Central Government offers frightful example of the oppression of the rights, privileges and sovereignty of this State by officers of the Federal Government. This intrusion results solely from force, or threat of force, undignified by any reasonable application of the principle of law, reason and justice. It is important that the people of this State and nation understand that this action is in violation of rights reserved to the State by the Constitution of the United States and the Constitution of the State of Alabama. While some few may applaud these acts, millions of Americans will gaze in sorrow upon the situation existing at this great institution of learning.

Only the Congress makes the law of the United States. To this date no statutory authority can be cited to the people of this Country which authorizes the Central Government to ignore the sovereignty of this State in an attempt to subordinate the rights of Alabama and millions of Americans. There has been no legislative action by Congress justifying this intrusion.

When the Constitution of the United States was enacted, a government was formed upon the premise that people, as individuals are endowed with the rights of life, liberty, and property, and with the right of self-government. The people and their local self-governments formed a Central Government and conferred upon it certain stated and limited powers. All other powers were reserved to the states and to the people.

Strong local government is the foundation of our system and must be continually guarded and maintained. The Tenth Amendment to the Constitution of the United States reads as follows:

"The powers not delegated to the United States by the Constitution, nor prohibited by it to the States, are reserved to the states respectively, or to the people."

This amendment sustains the right of self-government and grants the State of Alabama the right to enforce its laws and regulate its internal affairs. This nation was never meant to be a unit of one. but a united [sic] of the many this is the exact reason our freedom loving forefathers established the states, so as to divide the rights and powers among the states, insuring that no central power could gain master government control.

There can be no submission to the theory that the Central Government is anything but a servant of the people. We are a God-fearing people – not government-fearing people. We practice today the free heritage bequeathed to us by the Founding Fathers.

I stand here today, as Governor of this sovereign State, and refuse to willingly submit to illegal usurpation of power by the Central Government. I claim today for all the people of the State of Alabama those rights reserved to them under the Constitution of the United States. Among those powers so reserved and claimed is the right of state authority in the operation of the public schools, colleges and Universities. My action does not constitute disobedience to legislative and constitutional provisions. It is not defiance – for defiance sake, but for the purpose of raising basic and fundamental constitutional questions. My action is raising a call for strict adherence to the Constitution of the United States as it was written – for a cessation of usurpation and abuses. My action seeks to avoid having state sovereignty sacrificed on the altar of political expediency. Further, as the Governor of the State of Alabama, I hold the supreme executive power of this State, and it is my duty to see that the laws are faithfully executed. The illegal and unwarranted actions of the Central Government on this day, contrary to the laws, customs and traditions of this State is calculated to disturb the peace. I stand before you here today in place of thousands of other Alabamians whose presence would have confronted you had I been derelict and neglected to fulfill the responsibilities of my office. It is the right of every citizen, however humble he may be, through his chosen officials of representative government to stand courageously against whatever he believes to be the exercise of power beyond the Constitutional rights conferred upon our Federal Government. It is this right which I assert for the people of Alabama by my presence here today....

Again I state – this is the exercise of the heritage of the freedom and liberty under the law – coupled with responsible government.

Now, therefore, in consideration of the premises, and in my official capacity as Governor of the State of Alabama, I do hereby make the following solemn proclamation:

WHEREAS, the Constitution of Alabama vests the supreme executive powers of the State in the Governor as the Chief Magistrate, and said Constitution requires of the Governor that he take care that the laws be faithfully executed; and,

WHEREAS, the Constitution of the United States, Amendment 10, reserves to the States respectively or to the people, those powers not delegated to the United States; and,

WHEREAS, the operation of the public school system is a power reserved to the State of Alabama under the Constitution of the United States and Amendment 10 thereof; and,

WHEREAS, it is the duty of the Governor of the State of Alabama to preserve the peace under the circumstances now existing, which power is one reserved to the State of Alabama and the people thereof under the Constitution of the United States and Amendment 10 thereof.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, George C. Wallace, as Governor of the State of Alabama, have by my action raised issues between the Central Government and the Sovereign State of Alabama, which said issues should be adjudicated in the manner prescribed by the Constitution of the United States; and now being mindful of my duties and responsibilities under the Constitution of the United States, the Constitution of the State of Alabama, and seeking to preserve and maintain the peace and dignity of this State, and the individual freedoms of the citizens thereof, do hereby denounce and forbid this illegal and unwarranted action by the Central Government.

It is, as I have said, a special privilege for me to be here in 1960 when you are celebrating what I might call the golden wedding of the Union. At such a time it is natural and right that you should pause to take stock of your position, to look back at what you have achieved, to look forward to what lies ahead. In the fifty years of their nationhood the people of South Africa have built a strong economy founded upon a healthy agriculture and thriving and resilient industries.

No one could fail to be impressed with the immense material progress which has been achieved. That all this has been accomplished in so short a time is a striking testimony to the skill, energy and initiative of your people. We in Britain are proud of the contribution we have made to this remarkable achievement. Much of it has been financed by British capital.

[...] As I've travelled around the Union I have found everywhere, as I expected, a deep preoccupation with what is happening in the rest of the African continent. I understand and sympathise with your interests in these events and your anxiety about them.

Ever since the break-up of the Roman empire one of the constant facts of political life in Europe has been the emergence of independent nations. They have come into existence over the centuries in different forms, different kinds of government, but all have been inspired by a deep, keen feeling of nationalism, which has grown as the nations have grown.

In the twentieth century, and especially since the end of the war, the processes which gave birth to the nation states of Europe have been repeated all over the world. We have seen the awakening of national consciousness in peoples who have for centuries lived in dependence upon some other power. Fifteen years ago this movement spread through Asia. Many countries there, of different races and civilisations, pressed their claim to an independent national life.

Today the same thing is happening in Africa, and the most striking of all the impressions I have formed since I left London a month ago is of the strength of this African national consciousness. In different places it takes different forms, but it is happening everywhere.

The wind of change is blowing through this continent, and whether we like it or not, this growth of national consciousness is a political fact. We must all accept it as a fact, and our national policies must take account of it.

Well you understand this better than anyone, you are sprung from Europe, the home of nationalism, here in Africa you have yourselves created a free nation. A new nation. Indeed in the history of our times yours will be recorded as the first of the African nationalists. This tide of national consciousness which is now rising in Africa, is a fact, for which both you and we, and the other nations of the western world are ultimately responsible.

For its causes are to be found in the achievements of western civilisation, in the pushing forwards of the frontiers of knowledge, the applying of science to the service of human needs, in the expanding of food production, in the speeding and multiplying of the means of communication, and perhaps above all and more than anything else in the spread of education.

As I have said, the growth of national consciousness in Africa is a political fact, and we must accept it as such. That means, I would judge, that we've got to come to terms with it. I sincerely believe that if we cannot do so we may imperil the precarious balance between the East and West on which the peace of the world depends.

The world today is divided into three main groups. First there are what we call the Western Powers. You in South Africa and we in Britain belong to this group, together with our friends and allies in other parts of the Commonwealth. In the United States of America and in Europe we call it the Free World. Secondly there are the Communists – Russia and her satellites in Europe and China whose population will rise by the end of the next ten years to the staggering total of 800 million. Thirdly, there are those parts of the world whose people are at present uncommitted either to Communism or to our Western ideas. In this context we think first of Asia and then of Africa. As I see it the great issue in this second half of the twentieth century is whether the uncommitted peoples of Asia and Africa will swing to the East or to the West. Will they be drawn into the Communist camp? Or will the great experiments in self-government that are now being made in Asia and Africa, especially within the Commonwealth, prove so successful, and by their example so compelling, that the balance will

come down in favour of freedom and order and justice? The struggle is joined, and it is a struggle for the minds of men. What is now on trial is much more than our military strength or our diplomatic and administrative skill. It is our way of life. The uncommitted nations want to see before they choose.

How We Ended Welfare, Together

By BILL CLINTON

August 22, 2006

TEN years ago today I signed the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act. By then I had long been committed to welfare reform. As a governor, I oversaw a workfare experiment in Arkansas in 1980 and represented the National Governors Association in working with Congress and the Reagan administration to draft the welfare reform bill enacted in 1988.

Yet when I ran for president in 1992, our system still was not working for the taxpayers or for those it was intended to help. In my first State of the Union address, I promised to "end welfare as we know it," to make welfare a second chance, not a way of life, exactly the change most welfare recipients wanted it to be.

Most Democrats and Republicans wanted to pass welfare legislation shifting the emphasis from dependence to empowerment. Because I had already given 45 states waivers to institute their own reform plans, we had a good idea of what would work. Still, there were philosophical gaps to bridge. The Republicans wanted to require able-bodied people to work, but were opposed to continuing the federal guarantees of food and medical care to their children and to spending enough on education, training, transportation and child care to enable people to go to work in lower-wage jobs without hurting their children.

On Aug. 22, 1996, after vetoing two earlier versions, I signed welfare reform into law. At the time, I was widely criticized by liberals who thought the work requirements too harsh and conservatives who thought the work incentives too generous. Three members of my administration ultimately resigned in protest. Thankfully, a majority of both Democrats and Republicans voted for the bill because they thought we shouldn't be satisfied with a system that had led to intergenerational dependency.

The last 10 years have shown that we did in fact end welfare as we knew it, creating a new beginning for millions of Americans. In the past decade, welfare rolls have dropped substantially, from 12.2 million in 1996 to 4.5 million today. At the same time, caseloads declined by 54 percent. Sixty percent of mothers who left welfare found work, far surpassing predictions of experts. Through the Welfare to Work Partnership, which my administration started to speed the transition to employment, more than 20,000 businesses hired 1.1 million former welfare recipients. Welfare reform has proved a great success, and I am grateful to the Democrats and Republicans who had the courage to work together to take bold action. The success of welfare reform was bolstered by other anti-poverty initiatives, including the doubling of the earned-income tax credit in 1993 for lower-income workers; the 1997 Balanced Budget Act, which included \$3 billion to move long-term welfare recipients and low-income, noncustodial fathers into jobs; the Access to Jobs initiative, which helped communities create innovative transportation services to enable former welfare recipients and other low-income workers to get to their new jobs; and the welfare-to-work tax credit, which provided tax incentives to encourage businesses to hire long-term welfare recipients. I also signed into law the toughest child-support enforcement in history, doubling collections; an increase in the minimum wage in 1997; a doubling of federal financing for child care, helping parents look after 1.5 million children in 1998; and a near doubling of financing for Head Start programs.

The results: child poverty dropped to 16.2 percent in 2000, the lowest rate since 1979, and in 2000, the percentage of Americans on welfare reached its lowest level in four decades. Overall, 100 times as many people moved out of poverty and into the middle class during our eight years as in the previous 12. Of course the booming economy helped, but the empowerment policies made a big difference.

Regarding the politics of welfare reform, there is a great lesson to be learned, particularly in today's hyper-partisan environment, where the Republican leadership forces bills through Congress without even a hint of bipartisanship. Simply put, welfare reform worked because we all worked together. The 1996 Welfare Act shows us how much we can achieve when both parties bring their best ideas to the negotiating table and focus on doing what is best for the country. The recent welfare reform amendments, largely Republican-only initiatives, cut back on states' ability to devise their own programs. They also disallowed hours spent pursuing an education from counting against required weekly work hours. I doubt they will have the positive impact of the original legislation.... Ten years ago, neither side got exactly what it had hoped for. While we compromised to reach an agreement, we never betrayed our principles and we passed a bill that worked and stood the test of time. This style of cooperative governing is anything but a sign of weakness. It is a measure of strength, deeply rooted in our Constitution and history, and essential to the better future that all Americans deserve, Republicans and Democrats alike.

Bill Clinton, the 42nd president, heads the Clinton Foundation.

II. —STATUS OF GREAT BRITAIN AND THE DOMINIONS

The Committee are of opinion that nothing would be gained by attempting to lay down a Constitution for the British Empire. Its widely scattered parts have very different characteristics, very different histories, and are at very different stages of evolution; while, considered as a whole, it
5 defies classification and bears no real resemblance to any other political organisation which now exists or has ever yet been tried. There is, however, one most important element in it which, from a strictly constitutional point of view, has now, as regards all vital matters, reached its full development—we refer to the group of self-governing communities composed of Great Britain and the Dominions. Their position and mutual relation may be readily defined. *They are autonomous*
10 *Communities within the British Empire, equal in status, in no way subordinate one to another in any aspect of their domestic or external affairs, though united by a common allegiance to the Crown, and freely associated as members of the British Commonwealth of Nations.*

A foreigner endeavouring to understand the true character of the British Empire by the aid of this formula alone would be tempted to think that it was devised rather to make mutual interference
15 impossible than to make mutual co-operation easy.

Such a criticism, however, completely ignores the historic situation. The rapid evolution of the Overseas Dominions during the last fifty years has involved many complicated adjustments of old political machinery to changing conditions. The tendency towards equality of status was both right
20 and inevitable. Geographical and other conditions made this impossible of attainment by the way of federation. The only alternative was by the way of autonomy; and along this road it has been steadily sought. Every self-governing member of the Empire is now the master of its destiny. In fact, if not always in form, it is subject to no compulsion whatever.

But no account, however accurate, of the negative relations in which Great Britain and the Dominions stand to each other can do more than express a portion of the truth. The British Empire is
25 not founded upon negations. It depends essentially, if not formally, on positive ideals. Free institutions are its life-blood. Free co-operation is its instrument. Peace, security and progress are among its objects. Aspects of all these great themes have been discussed at the present Conference; excellent results have been thereby obtained. And though every Dominion is now, and must always remain, the sole judge of the nature and extent of its co-operation, no common cause will, in our
30 opinion, be thereby imperilled.

Equality of status, so far as Britain and the Dominions are concerned, is thus the root principle governing our Inter-Imperial Relations. But the principles of equality and similarity, appropriate to *status*, do not universally extend to function. Here we require something more than
35 immutable dogmas. For example, to deal with questions of diplomacy and questions of defence, we require also flexible machinery—machinery which can, from time to time, be adapted to the changing circumstances of the world. This subject also has occupied our attention. The rest of this report will show how we have endeavoured not only to state political theory, but to apply it to our common needs.

ELECTIVE DICTATORSHIP

I have called this lecture 'Elective Dictatorship'. You may think that a strange title. And you may think it all the stranger when I tell you that I mean by it our own system of government, which we have evolved through the centuries, and which we are apt to think of as the best and most democratic in the world. Now, please do not misunderstand me. I am as proud of our country and its institutions as anyone. For 700 years, we have been governed by one sovereign body - Queen, Lords, and Commons in Parliament assembled. It has served us well. For century after century, it has seen us safely through one change after another, from mediaeval monarchy to modern democracy. Under it, in our own time, we have survived and been victorious in two immense world wars, largely, because of the very qualities I am about to criticise. Even more strikingly, it is surely due to its unique combination of flexibility and authority that, for more than 300 years, we have managed to live together as a nation, in periods of constant change, without the searing experience of violent revolution or civil war.

Above all, I would wish to emphasise that our constitution has one advantage of priceless value: its immemorial antiquity, which, with its power of continuous growth, gives it a prestige and mystique not shared by any other nation in the world. All the same, I think the time has come to take stock, and to recognise how this nation, supposedly dedicated to freedom under law, has moved towards a totalitarianism which can only be altered by a systematic and radical overhaul of our constitution.

We are sometimes unaware that our constitution is unique. There is nothing quite like it, even among nations to whom we have given independence. They believe, of course, they have inherited the so-called Westminster model. Nothing of the kind. The Westminster model is something we have never exported, and, if we tried to do so, I doubt whether any nation would have been prepared to accept it. The point is not that all other nations have what is called, in a literal sense, a 'written constitution'. After all, much of our own constitution is in writing, and much more could be reduced to writing if we wanted, without making any appreciable change.

No, the point is that the powers of our own Parliament are absolute and unlimited. And in this, we are almost alone. All other free nations impose limitations on their representative assemblies. We impose none on ours. Parliament can take away a man's liberty or his life without a trial, and in past centuries, it has actually done so. It can prolong its own life, and in our own time, has done so twice, quite properly, during two world wars.

No doubt, in recent times, Parliament has not abused these particular powers. Nonetheless, the point I am making is that, as a result of the changes in its operation and structure, the absence of any legal limitation on the powers of Parliament has become quite unacceptable. And the questions which I desire to leave for your consideration are, first, whether the time has not come to end or modify this legal theory, and, secondly, whether and how it is possible to do so. Of course, this doctrine of absolute sovereignty of Parliament has been fully recognised for very many years. Judges may pass judgment on the acts of ministers, as they have recently done in the Tameside dispute, and in the arguments about Laker Skytrain or the payment of sewerage rates. To this extent, the rule of law applies and prevails here as in other free countries. But once the courts are confronted with an Act of Parliament, all they can do is to ascertain its meaning, if they can, and then apply it as justly and mercifully as the language of the law permits. So, of the two pillars of our constitution, the rule of law and the sovereignty of Parliament, it is the sovereignty of Parliament which is paramount in every case.

The limitations on it are only political and moral. They are found in the consciences of members, in the necessity for periodical elections, and in the so-called checks and balances inherent in the composition, structure and practice of Parliament itself. Only a revolution, bloody or peacefully contrived, can put an end to the situation which I have just described. We live under an elective dictatorship, absolute in theory, if hitherto thought tolerable in practice. How far it is still tolerable is the question I want to raise for discussion.

A good deal of water has flowed under Westminster Bridge since the sovereignty of Parliament was first established. And almost every drop has flowed in one direction: an enhancement of the actual use of its powers. To begin with, there has been a continuous enlargement of the scale and range of government itself. Then there has been a change in the relative influence of the different elements in government, so as to place all the effective powers in the hands of one of them; in other words, the checks and balances, which in practice used to prevent abuse, have now disappeared. So both sets of changes have operated in the same direction - to increase the extent to which elective dictatorship is a 'fact, and not just a lawyer's theory.

Until comparatively recently, Parliament consisted of two effective chambers. Now, for most practical purposes, it consists of one. Until recently, the powers of government within Parliament were largely controlled either by the opposition or by its own back-benchers. It is now largely in the hands of the government machine, so that the government controls Parliament, and not Parliament the government. Until recently, debate and argument dominated the parliamentary scene. Now, it is the whips and the party caucus. [...]

Lord HAILSHAM, The Dimpleby Lecture, The Listener, 21 October 1976.

U.S. Supreme Court
MINERSVILLE SCHOOL DISTRICT v. GOBITIS (1940)
Argued April 25, 1940.
Decided June 3, 1940.

Mr. Justice FRANKFURTER delivered the opinion of the Court.

A grave responsibility confronts this Court whenever in course of litigation it must reconcile the conflicting claims of liberty and authority. But when the liberty invoked is liberty of conscience, and the authority is authority to safeguard the nation's fellowship, judicial conscience is put to its severest test. Of such a nature is the present controversy. Lillian Gobitis, aged twelve, and her brother William, aged ten, were expelled from the public schools of Minersville, Pennsylvania, for refusing to salute the national flag as part of a daily school exercise. The local Board of Education required both teachers and pupils to participate in this ceremony. The ceremony is a familiar one. The right hand is placed on the breast and the following pledge recited in unison: 'I pledge allegiance to my flag, and to the Republic for which it stands; one nation indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.' While the words are spoken, teachers and pupils extend their right hands in salute to the flag. The Gobitis family are affiliated with 'Jehovah's Witnesses', for whom the Bible as the Word of God is the supreme authority. The children had been brought up conscientiously to believe that such a gesture of respect for the flag was forbidden by command of scripture. The Gobitis children were of an age for which Pennsylvania makes school attendance compulsory. Thus they were denied a free education and their parents had to put them into private schools. To be relieved of the financial burden thereby entailed, their father, on behalf of the children and in his own behalf, brought this suit. He sought to enjoin the authorities from continuing to exact participation in the flag-salute ceremony as a condition of his children's attendance at the Minersville school. ...

We must decide whether the requirement of participation in such a ceremony, exacted from a child who refuses upon sincere religious grounds, infringes without due process of law the liberty guaranteed by the Fourteenth Amendment. Centuries of strife over the erection of particular dogmas as exclusive or all-comprehending faiths led to the inclusion of a guarantee for religious freedom in the Bill of Rights. The First Amendment, and the Fourteenth through its absorption of the First, sought to guard against repetition of those bitter religious struggles by prohibiting the establishment of a state religion and by securing to every sect the free exercise of its faith. So pervasive is the acceptance of this precious right that its scope is brought into question, as here, only when the conscience of individuals collides with the felt necessities of society.

Certainly the affirmative pursuit of one's convictions about the ultimate mystery of the universe and man's relation to it is placed beyond the reach of law. Government may not interfere with organized or individual expression of belief or disbelief. Propagation of belief—or even of disbelief in the supernatural—is protected, whether in church or chapel, mosque or synagogue, tabernacle or meetinghouse. Likewise the Constitution assures generous immunity to the individual from imposition of penalties for offending, in the course of his own religious activities, the religious views of others, be they a minority or those who are dominant in government. ...

But the manifold character of man's relations may bring his conception of religious duty into conflict with the secular interests of his fellow-men. When does the constitutional guarantee compel exemption from doing what society thinks necessary for the promotion of some great common end, or from a penalty for conduct which appears dangerous to the general good? To state the problem is to recall the truth that no single principle can answer all of life's complexities. The right to freedom of religious belief, however dissident and however obnoxious to the cherished beliefs of others—even of a majority—is itself the denial of an absolute. But to affirm that the freedom to follow conscience has itself no limits in the life of a society would deny that very plurality of principles which, as a matter of history, underlies protection of religious toleration. ...

We are dealing here with the formative period in the development of citizenship. Great diversity of psychological and ethical opinion exists among us concerning the best way to train children for their place in society. Because of these differences and because of reluctance to permit a single, iron-cast system of education to be imposed upon a nation compounded of so many strains, we have held that, even though public education is one of our most cherished democratic institutions, the Bill of Rights bars a state from compelling all children to attend the public schools. ... But it is a very different thing for this Court to exercise censorship over the conviction of legislatures that a particular program or exercise will best promote in the minds of children who attend the common schools an attachment to the institutions of their country.

What the school authorities are really asserting is the right to awaken in the child's mind considerations as to the significance of the flag contrary to those implanted by the parent. In such an attempt the state is normally at a disadvantage in competing with the parent's authority, so long-and this is the vital aspect of religious toleration-

as parents are unmolested in their right to counteract by their own persuasiveness the wisdom and rightness of those loyalties which the state's educational system is seeking to promote. Except where the transgression of constitutional liberty is too plain for argument, personal freedom is best maintained-so long as the remedial channels of the democratic process remain open and unobstructed⁶-when it is ingrained in a people's habits and not enforced against popular policy by the coercion of adjudicated law. That the flag salute is an allowable portion of a school program for those who do not invoke conscientious scruples is surely not debatable. But for us to insist that, though the ceremony may be required, exceptional immunity must be given to dissidents, is to maintain that there is no basis for a legislative judgment that such an exemption might introduce elements of difficulty into the school discipline, might cast doubts in the minds of the other children which would themselves weaken the effect of the exercise.

The preciousness of the family relation, the authority and independence which give dignity to parenthood, indeed the enjoyment of all freedom, presuppose the kind of ordered society which is summarized by our flag. A society which is dedicated to the preservation of these ultimate values of civilization may in self-protection utilize the educational process for inculcating those almost unconscious feelings which bind men together in a comprehending loyalty, whatever may be their lesser differences and difficulties. That is to say, the process may be utilized so long as men's right to believe as they please, to win others to their way of belief, and their right to assemble in their chosen places of worship for the devotional ceremonies of their faith, are all fully respected. ...