

Judge Andrew P. Napolitano on July 4, 2026

by Andrew P. Napolitano | Jul 4, 2026 | News | 1 Comment

"Which is better — to be ruled by one tyrant 3,000 miles away or by 3,000 tyrants one mile away?" ~ Rev. Mather Byles (1706-1788)

Does it really matter if the instrument curtailing liberty is a monarch or a popularly elected legislature? This conundrum, along with the witty version of it put to a Boston crowd in 1775 by the little-known colonial-era preacher with the famous uncle — Cotton Mather — addresses the age-old question of whether liberty can long survive in a democracy.

Byles was a loyalist who, along with about one-third of the American adult white male population in 1776, opposed the American Revolution and favored continued governance by Great Britain.

He didn't fight for the king or agitate against George Washington's troops; he merely warned of the dangers of too much democracy.

Many of us who monitor federal excess are fearful of out-of-control democracy, which is what we have in America today, yet there remain in our federal structure a few safeguards against runaway federal tyranny, such as the equal state representation in the Senate, the Electoral College, the state control of federal elections, the remnants of state sovereignty, and life-tenured federal judges and justices.

Of course, the Senate as originally crafted did not consist of popularly elected senators. Rather, they were appointed by state legislatures to represent the sovereign states as states, not the people in them.

Part of James Madison's genius was the construction of the federal government as a three-sided table. The first side represented the people — the House of Representatives. The second side represented the sovereign states that created the federal government by surrendering limited powers to it — the Senate. And the third side manifests the nation-state — the presidency, which is both head of state and head of the executive branch of the federal government. The judiciary, whose prominent role today was unthinkable in 1789, was not part of this mix.

In his famous Bank Speech, Madison argued eloquently against legislation chartering a national bank because the authority to create a bank was not in the Constitution and thus was retained by the states and reserved to them.

In that speech, he warned that expansion of the federal government would trample the powers of the states and also the unenumerated natural rights of the people that he would soon protect in the Ninth Amendment.

Madison gave the Bank Speech in February 1791, 11 months before the addition of the Bill of Rights — the first 10 amendments — to the Constitution. Given the popular fears of a new central government, Madison assumed that the Bill of Rights would be quickly ratified. He was right.

Had Madison been alive during the presidency of the anti-Madisonian Woodrow Wilson — who gave us World War I, the Federal Reserve, the administrative state of government by experts, the popular election of senators, the judicially sanctioned suppression of political speech, and the federal income tax — he would have recoiled at a president

destroying the three-sided table. Wilson did that by leading the campaign to amend the Constitution so as to provide for the direct popular election of senators.

Part of Madison's genius was to craft anti-democratic elements into the Constitution, as well. And some of them — like state sovereignty — created laboratories of liberty, since some states protect more personal liberties than the Bill of Rights does. President Ronald Reagan reminded the American public in his first inaugural address that the states formed the federal government, not the other way around. Had I been the scrivener of that speech, I'd have encouraged him to add: "And the powers that the states gave to the feds, they can take back!" Of course they can.

Reagan also famously said that we could vote with our feet. If you don't like the over-the-top regulations in Massachusetts, you can move to New Hampshire. If you're fed up with the highest state taxes in the union in New Jersey, you can move to Pennsylvania.

But the more state sovereignty the feds absorb — the more state governance is federalized — the fewer differences there are among the regulatory and taxing structures of the states. This has happened because Congress has become a general legislature without regard for the constitutional limits imposed on it.

If Congress wants to regulate an area of governance that is clearly beyond its constitutional competence, it bribes the states to do so with borrowed or Federal Reserve-created cash. Thus, it offered hundreds of millions of dollars to the states to lower their speed limits on highways and to lower the acceptable blood alcohol level in peoples' veins — this would truly have set Madison off — before a presumption of DWI may be argued; all in return for cash to pave state-maintained highways.

The states are partly to blame for this. They take whatever cash Congress offers, and they accept the strings that come with it. And they, too, are tyrants. The states mandated the unconstitutional and crippling COVID lockdowns of 2020-2021, not the feds. The states should be paying the political and financial consequences for their misdeeds, not the feds. They took property and liberty without paying for it as the Constitution requires them to do. And, of course, some of the states maintained legal protections for slavery.

Byles feared a government of 3,000. Today, the feds employ close to 3 million. Thomas Jefferson warned that when the federal treasury becomes a federal trough, and the people recognize it as such, they will only send to Washington politicians — faithless to the Constitution — who promise to bring home the most cash.

In a democracy, a faithless majority will take whatever it wants from the minority — including its liberty and property. That's where we are today on the 250th anniversary of the start of this Jeffersonian and Madisonian experiment — a country the Founders wouldn't recognize as their creation.

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When the children become the target

By Vijay PRASHAD

On June 23, the United Nations Independent International Commission of Inquiry on the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and Israel released one of the most devastating reports ever produced by a UN investigative body on the Israeli genocide in Gaza.

Its title is almost unbearable to read: *The Essence of Childhood Has Been Destroyed*. Behind the title lies an accusation of extraordinary gravity. The Commission concludes that Israeli authorities and security forces have deliberately targeted Palestinian children and that these actions amount to genocide, crimes against humanity, and war crimes in the Gaza Strip, alongside war crimes in the occupied West Bank.

The report is not an emotional appeal. It is a painstaking legal document built upon witness testimony, forensic evidence, satellite imagery, military analysis, medical records, and years of documentation. What it presents is not merely another catalogue of civilian casualties. It argues that the killing, maiming, starvation, detention and psychological destruction of Palestinian children cannot be explained as collateral damage. Rather, the Commission concludes that children themselves have become deliberate targets of Israeli military policy. The implications of such a finding reach far beyond Gaza. They raise fundamental questions about the future of international law itself.

A Report of Extraordinary Gravity

The Commission estimates that since October 2023, at least 20,179 Palestinian children have been killed and more than 44,000 injured. Approximately thirty per cent of all Palestinians killed have been children. These figures alone place the Gaza war among the deadliest conflicts for children in modern history. Yet the report's importance lies not simply in the numbers but in its conclusions regarding intent.

It documents repeated instances in which children were shot by snipers, attacked by drones, struck while seeking food or water, or killed despite posing no military threat – as should have been obvious. It examines the repeated use of high-yield explosives in densely populated civilian areas long after the predictable consequences for children had become undeniable. It details attacks on maternity hospitals, neonatal wards, schools, orphanages and shelters. It also examines the blockade of food, water and medicine, showing how starvation, disease and the collapse of medical services have become instruments of war directed against an entire civilian population whose youngest members are the most vulnerable.

The Commission investigates Israeli detention practices involving Palestinian minors. Children arrested in Gaza and the West Bank describe torture, sexual violence, degrading treatment and disappearance into detention facilities without information being provided to their families. Such abuses, the report concludes, form part of a broader system of collective punishment directed against Palestinian society across generations. The UN Commission report is not novel on this, even though the findings are devastating. They corroborate previous reports by Save the Children (*Palestinian Children in Israeli Military Detention Report Increasingly Violent Conditions*, 29 February 2024) and, long before this genocidal campaign that began in 2023 by UNICEF (*Children in Israeli Military Detention*, February 2013). In his recent book, *Survivors of the Darkness*, the Palestinian journalist Wesam Afifa documents the horrendous violence of the Israeli concentration camps set up for Palestinians, including children.

Perhaps the UN report's most chilling conclusion is that the destruction extends beyond physical death. Childhood itself has become a battlefield. Psychological trauma, orphanhood, repeated displacement, hunger, interrupted education and permanent disability together amount to what the Commission describes as the destruction of 'the essence of childhood'.

A Pattern Long Documented

The Commission's findings did not emerge suddenly. For nearly two years, Palestinian journalists have documented children pulled from collapsed buildings, infants dying in incubators without electricity, families wiped out in airstrikes and children shot while attempting to retrieve food or water. Many of those journalists paid with their own lives. Gaza has become the 'deadliest conflict ever for journalists', reported Irene Khan, the UN Special Rapporteur on the promotion and protection of the right to freedom of opinion and expression. Yet, despite extraordinary danger the journalists continued documenting events that much of the world preferred not to see.

International human rights organisations reached similar conclusions long before this recent UN report. Save the Children repeatedly warned that Gaza had become one of the most dangerous places on earth to be a child. Defence for Children International–Palestine documented repeated shootings of children in circumstances that raised serious questions about military necessity. Human Rights Watch investigated attacks on schools, hospitals and refugee camps. Amnesty International examined repeated strikes that appeared to violate the principles of distinction and proportionality under international humanitarian law. UNICEF repeatedly warned that children were being killed and injured on an unprecedented scale. None of these organisations described isolated accidents. They identified recurring patterns that demanded independent investigation. The new UN report effectively consolidates this vast body of evidence into a single legal assessment.

In January 2024, the International Court of Justice found that South Africa's case alleging genocide by Israel was plausible and ordered provisional measures requiring Israel to prevent acts prohibited under the Genocide Convention, preserve evidence, and facilitate humanitarian assistance. Subsequent orders strengthened these requirements as conditions in Gaza deteriorated. Although the Court has not yet ruled on the merits of the genocide case, it has repeatedly recognised the grave risk faced by the Palestinian population and the continuing obligations imposed upon Israel under international law. The new Commission report provides further evidentiary material that will inevitably shape future legal proceedings.

The Silence of the Israeli State

Perhaps equally striking has been the nature of Israel's response. Rather than seriously engaging with the evidence assembled by the Commission, Israeli officials once again dismissed the report outright, describing it as politically motivated and fundamentally biased. They rejected its conclusions in their entirety without offering substantive rebuttal of the specific incidents, witness testimony, or forensic evidence presented by investigators. Every state has the right to defend itself against allegations. But serious allegations require serious answers.

If children were not deliberately targeted, the burden rests upon the Israeli authorities to explain why thousands of children have died in circumstances repeatedly documented by journalists, humanitarian organisations, medical personnel, and now a UN Commission of Inquiry. Why have hospitals, maternity wards, schools and refugee shelters been struck again and again? Why have humanitarian convoys repeatedly come under attack? Why have children continued to die even after ceasefire arrangements? Why have military investigations produced so little accountability? Simply repeating accusations of institutional bias cannot substitute for factual explanation. The refusal to engage with evidence has itself become a disturbing feature of this war.

International humanitarian law rests upon the principle that states are accountable for their conduct. Accountability becomes impossible when every investigation is dismissed before its evidence is even examined.

Justice S. Muralidhar and the Duty of the Judge

The findings of the UN Commission also remind us of the importance of judges who understand that the law is not merely a technical instrument but a defence against arbitrary power. Few Indian judges have embodied that principle more consistently than Justice S. Muralidhar, who as UN Commission on Human Rights, chaired this new report's committee.

Justice Muralidhar earned a reputation over decades as one of India's most respected constitutional jurists, particularly in cases involving civil liberties, communal violence, and the protection of vulnerable communities. He was one of the principal judicial voices in implementing accountability after the 1984 anti-Sikh pogrom, insisting that impunity could not become the norm merely because the crimes were politically inconvenient. His commitment to constitutional duty became internationally known during the communal violence in northeast Delhi in February 2020. As hospitals struggled to treat victims trapped by the violence, Justice Muralidhar and Justice Anup J. Bhambhani convened an extraordinary midnight hearing at Justice Muralidhar's residence. The Delhi High Court ordered the police to ensure the safe passage of the injured to hospitals and directed immediate emergency medical treatment. Later that day, Justice Muralidhar sharply questioned the failure of the Delhi Police to register cases against political leaders whose inflammatory speeches had been widely circulated, reminding the authorities that the country could not permit 'another 1984'.

Within hours of these hearings, the Government of India notified Justice Muralidhar's transfer to the Punjab and Haryana High Court, although the recommendation for his transfer had formally been made by the Supreme Court Collegium earlier that month. The timing generated widespread concern among lawyers, retired judges, and civil society organisations, who regarded the episode as raising troubling questions about judicial independence.

Justice Muralidhar's career illustrates an essential principle of the rule of law. Courts do not exist to ratify the conduct of governments. Their function is to examine evidence without fear or favour, especially when the victims are those with the least political power. The same principle animates the work of the UN Commission of Inquiry. Its conclusions may be contested, but they cannot simply be dismissed because they are politically inconvenient. The proper response to serious evidence is serious engagement. That is the first obligation of any state that claims to respect the rule of law.

The Test Before Humanity

The UN Commission's report is ultimately not only about Israel or Palestine.

It asks whether the international legal order created after the defeat of European fascism still possesses the moral authority to defend children from organised violence. If more than 20,000 children can be killed while the institutions of international diplomacy continue largely as normal, then the promise embodied in the Genocide Convention, the Geneva Conventions, and the Convention on the Rights of the Child stands gravely diminished. The report will not end the war. It cannot restore the lives already lost. But it establishes a historical record that will become increasingly difficult to erase. Long after governments change and military campaigns conclude, this record will remain. History remembers those who committed atrocities. It also remembers those who looked away.

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Declaring America's Independence From the Tyranny of Militarism and War

by William Astore | Jul 4, 2026 | News | 2 Comments

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In July 1776, courageous colonists came together to declare their independence from the perceived tyranny of King George III. "Rebels" like Thomas Jefferson urged the colonists to start down a new path, one of independence from the Crown, one that put life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness before fealty to a king. It was a long-shot effort, but the rebels somehow pulled it off.

Today, America has a new "king." It's the national security state, with all its threat inflation, its wars, and its appetite for more, always more. Combine that with President Trump and self-styled Secretary of War Pete Hegseth and their reckless pursuit of war irrespective of the Constitution and of international law, let alone Christian concepts of morality, and you have a form of tyranny that Americans must declare their independence from.

So, consistent with Jefferson, we need a new American revolution, or if you prefer a restoration of the republic, one that recognizes that immense imperial militaries are corrosive to democracy and individual liberty.

2026 can be a new 1776 if America rejects the tyranny of war and ever-higher Pentagon spending. America needs new sons and daughters of liberty, committed to diplomacy and peace, as fostered in a true participatory democracy that puts the needs of U.S. citizens first.

America's Founders knew that persistent war is a most insidious and pernicious enemy to our freedoms. America today is a structure infested by the termites of war. If we fail to get rid of them, our house will collapse in a pile of dust.

Since 1776, many patriotic Americans have warned of the dangers of persistent warfare and steroidal military spending. Perhaps most famously, President Dwight D. Eisenhower in 1953 spoke of the immense waste of weapons spending: how humanity would crucify itself on a cross of iron if wars endured and war budgets kept rising. He spoke again in 1961 of how America's military-industrial complex was threatening the fundamental freedoms and liberty of Americans, especially if that complex was allowed to spread and grow. Ike's warning went unheeded as America fought disastrous and unnecessary wars in Vietnam, Afghanistan, Iraq, Iran and elsewhere.

Ike came to recognize the astonishing waste and dangers of militarism and war. So should we all. Let us on our nation's 250th birthday declare our independence from persistent and pernicious militarism and warfare.

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Dear Mr. Jefferson: A Letter From the Smallest American Gianna Bailey

If all people are "created equal," then it seems to entail that personhood is bestowed at the moment we are created, that is, the moment we are conceived.

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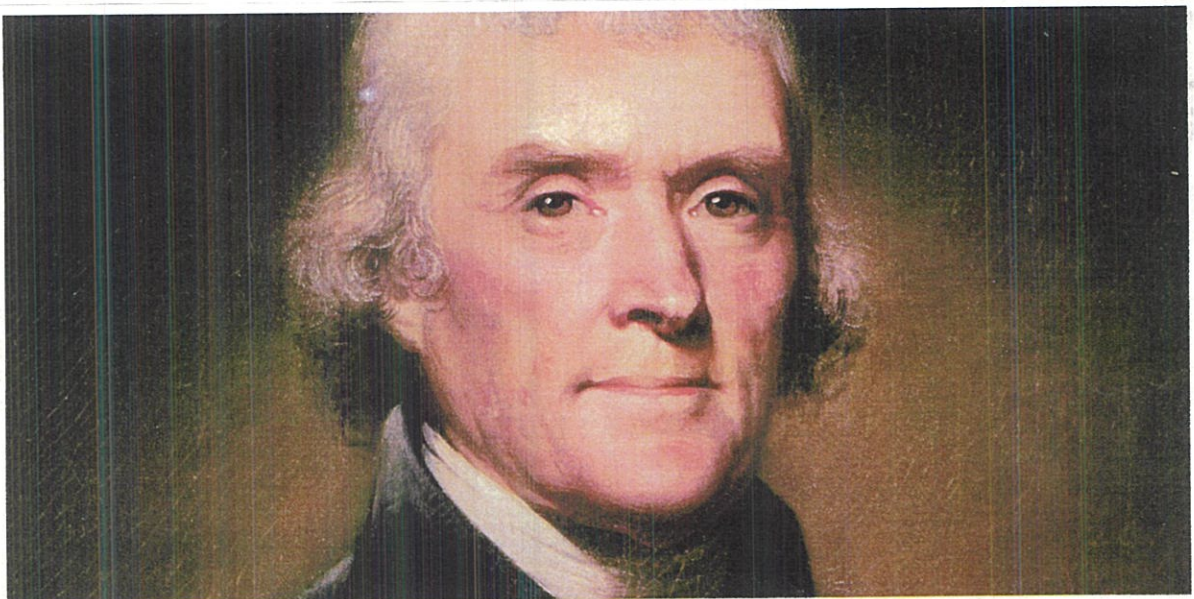
Dear Mr. Jefferson,

Two hundred and fifty years ago, you wrote, "We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal..." Did you know that someday people would debate whether someone like me—the smallest American—is included in this promise? I cannot yet speak for myself. I cannot protest, vote, or plead my case. But if all men are created equal, then surely equality should include the vulnerable, the defenseless, and the smallest among us. And so, Mr. Jefferson, I write to you today with a question that weighs heavily on my tiny heart: If all men are created equal, then why do so many deny that someone like me should be included in the promise of this principle? Does "all men" include me?

In the name of personal decisions, convenience, and circumstance, I hear people say, "My body, my choice." I ask you: What happens to a society when one person's freedom is believed to outweigh another person's right to exist? I am not my mother's body. I am *my own* body. I have my own heartbeat, my own gifts, my own life, my own future. My DNA is my own; it is unlike that of any person who has ever lived or ever will live. I am not an appendage. I am not an organ.

Do they know that my heart began beating just days after my life began—before my mother even knew I was there? Do they know that my brain was already sending its first signals as the foundation for every thought, idea, dream, and memory I would one day have? Do they know that my tiny fingers and toes appeared long before my mother would hold me in her arms?

From the moment I came into existence, I was a distinct human life, endowed by my Creator with the same unalienable Rights as any other person: Life, Liberty, and the pursuit of Happiness. Like you—and every other American—I was created, and according to your Declaration, "created equal." I am greatly comforted by this word that you chose: *created*. You did not suggest that equality is something to be earned through age, strength, status, power, independence, or accomplishment. Rather, you boldly proclaimed that the promise of equality is inherent to every person from the very beginning—from *creation*.



Mr. Jefferson, you know well that, throughout history, America has failed to remember this truth and that countless people have claimed ownership over other human beings to advance their own self-interest. Slaves were treated as property rather than people—their value determined by the desires and decisions of their masters rather than by their humanity. Yet the promise of your Declaration was that no human being belongs to another—*all people* are "created equal" and that these "unalienable Rights" do not come from size, strength, age, ability or disability, or whether they were planned for or wanted. They come from being *human*.

So, if I am a human being (and science says that I am), then I cannot be the property of someone else. I cannot be reduced to a choice made for convenience. My worth cannot be measured by whether I am wanted or not. Like every person who has ever lived, I possess my own dignity, my own identity, and my own right to Life, Liberty, and the pursuit of Happiness. I am not a possession. I am a person.

I wonder what would happen if people considered what I and thousands of others like me might someday contribute to this world. Perhaps I will educate children or fight for their rights in a court of law. Perhaps I will find a cure for cancer or invent a revolutionary product or technology. Perhaps I will become the President of the United States and leave a lasting mark on our nation, just as you did over two hundred years ago. No one knows the answer, but this uncertainty does not diminish my humanity. Every person who ever made history and changed the world began exactly as I am now: tiny, dependent, and full of promise.

Mr. Jefferson, did you know that your profound words would one day be the rallying cry for abolitionists and suffragists? Did you know that they would inspire generations of Americans to stand up for the voiceless and the oppressed? Did you know that they would challenge each generation to broaden their understanding of human dignity and equality? I, too, am one of those inspired by your words, and so I ask once more: If all men are created equal, then does “all” include me?

With enduring hope,

The Smallest American

Author

Gianna Bailey

ON THE OCCASION OF THE 250TH ANNIVERSARY

The United States of America celebrates its Semiquincentennial on July 4th, marking 250 years since the Declaration of Independence was signed in 1776. We give special thanks to God for His many blessings on our nation, and it is very appropriate to honor the day with special prayers and devotions. One of these is the Prayer for the Church and Civil Authorities, composed by Archbishop John Carroll, the first bishop of Baltimore and the founder of the American ecclesial hierarchy. His prayer has consistently appeared in American Catholic devotionals for over two centuries, and it is often prayed publicly on days of national importance.

PRAYER FOR THE CHURCH AND CIVIL AUTHORITIES

We pray Thee, O Almighty and Eternal God, who through Jesus Christ hast revealed Thy glory to all nations, to preserve the works of Thy mercy; that Thy Church, being spread through the whole world, may continue, with unchanging faith, in the confession of Thy name.

We pray Thee, who alone art good and holy, to endow with heavenly knowledge, sincere zeal, and sanctity of life our chief bishop, N., the Vicar of our Lord Jesus Christ in the government of His Church; our own Bishop, (or Archbishop,) N., (if he is not consecrated, our Bishop-elect); all other Bishops, Prelates, and Pastors of the Church; and especially those who are appointed to exercise among us the functions of the holy ministry, and conduct Thy people into the ways of salvation.

We pray Thee, O God of might, wisdom, and justice, through whom authority is rightly administered, laws are enacted, and judgments decreed, assist, with Thy Holy Spirit of counsel and fortitude, the President of these United States, that his administration may be conducted in righteousness, and be eminently useful to Thy people, over whom he presides, by encouraging due respect for virtue and religion; by a faithful execution of the laws in justice and mercy; and by restraining vice and immorality. Let the light of Thy divine wisdom direct the deliberations of Congress, and shine forth in all the proceedings and laws framed for our role and government; so, that they may tend to the preservation of peace, the promotion of national happiness, the increase of industry, sobriety, and useful knowledge, and may perpetuate to us the blessings of equal liberty.

We pray for his Excellency the Governor of this State, for the members of the Assembly, for all Judges, Magistrates, and other officers who are appointed to guard our political welfare; that they may be enabled, by Thy powerful protection, to discharge the duties of their respective stations with honesty and ability.



We recommend likewise to Thy unbounded mercy all our brethren and fellow-citizens throughout the United States, that they may be blessed in the knowledge and sanctified in the observance of most holy law; that they may be preserved in union, and in that peace which the world cannot give; and, after enjoying the blessings of this life, be admitted to those which are eternal.

Finally, we pray Thee, O Lord of mercy, to remember the souls of Thy servants departed who are gone before us with the sign of faith, and repose in the sleep of peace: the souls of our parents, relations, and friends; of those who, when living, were members of this congregation; and particularly of such as are lately deceased; of all benefactors who, by their donations or legacies to this Church, witnessed their zeal for the decency of divine worship, and proved their claim to our grateful and charitable remembrance. To these, O Lord, and to all that rest in Christ, grant, we beseech Thee, a place of refreshment, light, and everlasting peace, through the same Jesus Christ, our Lord and Savior. Amen. ✠

Ditch the Pledge of Allegiance

May 22, 2026

by [Jacob G. Hornberger](#)

If there is one thing that American citizens remember from their 12 long years in public (i.e., government) schools, it's the Pledge of Allegiance. That's because they recited or heard it recited every single morning before the start of classes. The Pledge is such an ingrained part of American society that oftentimes adults at public events proudly stand, place their right hand on their heart, and recite the Pledge.

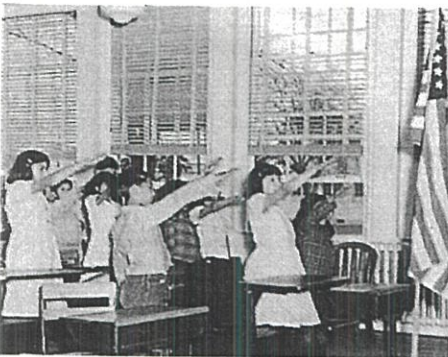
Of course, no student in public school is required to recite the Pledge. That's because of the Supreme Court's ruling in *West Virginia State Board of Education v. Barnette*, which held that forcing students to salute the flag or recite the Pledge violated the First Amendment. That ruling was in 1943. One can imagine the statists exclaiming about how the Supreme Court hated America and loved the Nazis, especially given that the ruling came out in the middle of World War II.

It's not beyond the realm of reasonable possibility that many students rise and recite the Pledge simply out of peer pressure. It's not easy for some teenagers to take a principled stand against the rest of their class, their teacher, and most everyone else in school who is deferring to authority. It's much easier to go along, stand, and dutifully recite the Pledge.

I think it's worth mentioning that the Pledge of Allegiance was written by a socialist, a man named Edward Bellamy. He authored the Pledge in 1892, when American socialists were starting to make inroads in America.

The real question is: Why should anyone be forced or expected to pledge allegiance to anything? Why shouldn't everyone simply be free to live his life the way he wants?

After all, let's not forget that Americans had no Pledge of Allegiance for more than 100 years. Should we accuse them of hating America or being disloyal or unpatriotic? In fact, the last thing they wanted was a Pledge of Allegiance or any sort of loyalty oath because those things were an integral part of the oppressive regimes from which they had fled to come to America.



American students reciting the Pledge of Allegiance using the Bellamy Salute.

Consider the first line of the Pledge of Allegiance: "I pledge allegiance to the flag of the United States and to the republic for which it stands." There is one big problem with that line: America is no longer a republic. It's a national-security state. Yet, I'll bet that not one single public-school student in America understands that point. In their minds, they are pledging allegiance to a limited-government republic when in fact they are pledging allegiance to a governmental structure that wields omnipotent, totalitarian-like powers, such as the power of committing state-sponsored assassinations.

Or consider this phrase from the Pledge: "with liberty and justice for all." Most Americans who graduated from public schools honestly believe that that's a truthful phrase. That's what indoctrination can do — it can cause people to believe flagrant lies. And the effect of indoctrination on the human mind can last a lifetime.

It's obvious, at least to libertarians, that there isn't liberty for all in America. The welfare state forces people to be "good" and "caring." The drug war punishes people for possessing non-approved substances. The immigration police state criminalizes Americans who hire or care for illegal immigrants. Americans who travel to Cuba and spend money there are put into American prisons. The federal government wields the power to take whatever percentage of people's income it wants. Americans can't pursue many occupations or professions without governmental permission.

And "justice for all"? Where is the justice for those boat people on the high seas that the U.S. national-security establishment is killing without due process of law? Is state-sponsored murder what now passes for "justice" in America? That's certainly what the Pledge of Allegiance implies.

It seems to me that the more oppressive and tyrannical a regime becomes, the more it insists on a Pledge of Allegiance and loyalty oaths. As our American ancestors understood, in a genuinely free society no such oaths are necessary or desirable.

Does this mean that the Pledge of Allegiance should be eliminated in public (i.e., government) schools? Why settle for that? Why not get rid of public (i.e., government) schooling entirely, including its beloved Pledge of Allegiance, its indoctrination, and the mindset of conformity and deference to authority that it inculcates in its students?

This post was written by: [Jacob G. Hornberger](#)

Jacob G. Hornberger is founder and president of The Future of Freedom Foundation. He was born and raised in Laredo, Texas, and received his B.A. in economics from Virginia Military Institute and his law degree from the University of Texas. He was a trial attorney for twelve years in Texas. He also was an adjunct professor at the University of Dallas, where he taught law and economics. In 1987, Mr. Hornberger left the practice of law to become director of programs at the Foundation for Economic Education. He has advanced freedom and free markets on talk-radio stations all across the country as well as on Fox News' Neil Cavuto and Greta van Susteren shows and he appeared as a regular commentator on Judge Andrew Napolitano's show *Freedom Watch*. View these interviews at [LewRockwell.com](#) and from [Full Context](#). Send him [email](#).



The U.S. Dollar's Eroding Purchasing Power

The U.S. dollar has lost nearly 30 percent of its purchasing power since 2020, a stark illustration of inflation's impact on American households. According to [analyses](#) citing data from the Consumer Price Index (CPI), what cost \$100 in early 2020 would cost roughly \$130 for the same goods and services by mid-2026.

The CPI is a statistical tool compiled by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS). It tracks changes in the price of a basket of consumer goods and services. It shows a [cumulative price increase](#) of 29 percent over the past six years, equating to an average annual inflation rate of roughly 4.3 percent.

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Factors driving the erosion include massive fiscal and monetary responses to the Covid-19 pandemic, such as trillions of dollars in government stimulus and Federal Reserve bond buying. This boosted demand, while supply chains faltered.

Inflation Understatement

Some argue that the CPI understates inflation by underweighting essentials such as housing, groceries, and fuel for many families. Reporting for [The New American](#) in 2008, analyst Dr. John Fisher explained that "changes to the CPI ... have increasingly distorted official statistics" to create a false sense of economic stability. This distortion is destructive because "the Treasury and the Federal Reserve use the CPI as one of the measures for establishing U.S. monetary policy."

The first major adjustment to how the CPI is calculated occurred under President Richard Nixon, with introduction of the "core" CPI, which intentionally omits essential items such as food and energy, though they are essential and their cost increases are often most acute. Commentators described it at the time as calculation of "inflation after inflation has been excluded."

The next series of changes came in the 1980s, and they collectively produced a reported inflation rate roughly six to eight percentage points lower than the previous methodology would show. This is according to economist John Williams, who [describes the adjustments](#) at [ShadowStats.com](#).

The substitution effect assumes consumers swap expensive goods for cheaper alternatives when prices rise, effectively penalizing households for being priced out of their preferred purchases. Hedonic adjustments, which discount price increases by attributing them to quality improvements in products such as electronics and automobiles, further suppress the reported number. Owners' Equivalent Rent replaced actual home purchase prices with a hypothetical estimate of what homeowners would charge themselves to rent their own homes, a figure that consistently understates real housing costs.

Bad Feelings

The cumulative effect of these adjustments, Williams argues, means that the dollar's purchasing power loss since 2020 is closer to 50 percent when measured against the consistent pre-manipulation methodology. This is precisely why consumer sentiment surveys have persistently shown Americans feeling far worse about the economy than the official statistics suggest they should.

Even by the current CPI's rosier numbers, the situation is [gloomy](#). A family needing \$50,000 annually in 2020 for the same lifestyle would require about \$65,000 today. This environment has fueled interest in alternatives such as Bitcoin, gold, or real assets as inflation hedges.

Long-term, the dollar has lost more than 96 percent of its value since the Federal Reserve's creation in 1913, highlighting fiat currency's structural vulnerability.

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The Fiat Money Maestro

RON PAUL • JUNE 29, 2026 • 500 WORDS • 10 COMMENTS

Former Federal Reserve Chairman Alan Greenspan passed away last week at the age of 100. Greenspan chaired the Fed from 1987 through 2006.

Despite being a lifelong Republican, Greenspan refused to lower interest rates, though doing so may have helped George H.W. Bush's 1992 reelection campaign. However, he did tailor monetary policy to support President Clinton's 1993 budget, as well as the 1997 bipartisan budget deal.

Greenspan's handling of monetary policy was widely credited as responsible for the 1990s strong economy. As a result, the cult of the Federal Reserve chairman reached new heights under Greenspan. During Greenspan's tenure it became so common for the Fed to act to help bail out large financial firms that experienced financial difficulty that many began referring to the "Greenspan put." Greenspan was even the subject of a bestselling biography by Bob Woodward titled *Maestro*. New Republic reporter Stephen Glass wrote about Wall Street professionals maintaining a shrine to Greenspan. While the story was later revealed to be one of many fabrications created by Glass, at the time it seemed believable that Wall Street offices would contain shrines to Greenspan.

Greenspan's reputation survived the bursting of the Fed-created tech bubble. The Fed responded to the bursting of the tech bubble and the economic downturn following 9-11 by creating another bubble, this time in housing.

Greenspan had already left the Fed when the housing bubble burst. His successor Ben Bernanke undertook unprecedented interventions in the economy. The meltdown, and the Fed's response, coincided with the rise of a new liberty movement. This movement, which included a large number of young people, made opposition to the Federal Reserve a central part of its agenda. The liberty movement influenced the larger Tea Party, making monetary policy a major issue in American politics for the first time in over a century. Skepticism of the Fed was common in both the Tea Party and the left populist Occupy Wall Street movement. Many people involved with the Tea Party and Occupy Wall Street properly viewed the Fed as an institution that serves the elites at the expense of average Americans.

The increased focus on the Fed resulted in the Audit the Fed bill twice passing the House. Continued opposition to the Fed among regular Americans is fueled by President Trump's public (and often misguided) attacks on the central bank.

The Fed's continued devaluation of the dollar, done in large part to monetize the government's almost 40 trillion dollars (and growing) debt, will lead to a dollar crisis. That dollar crisis will permanently destroy not just the Fed's reputation but the Fed itself along with the welfare-warfare state.

Ironically, a good explanation of why fiat currency is the enemy of liberty and gold is the friend of liberty is provided in "Gold and Economic Freedom" written by none other than Alan Greenspan and published in Ayn Rand's *The Objectivist* newsletter in 1966. In that essay Greenspan wrote "Deficit spending is simply a scheme for the 'hidden' confiscation of wealth. Gold stands in the way of this insidious process. It stands as a protector of property rights." Those seeking the path to prosperity and liberty should embrace the wisdom Greenspan showed before he became the fiat money maestro.

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The Second Nakba: Displacement of Palestinians in and after the 1967 Occupation

June 1967, an Endless Six-Day War · Nineteen years after the Nakba (1947-1949), Israel carried out a second wave of expulsions of Palestinians from their homeland during and after the 1967 war. Without hope of return, they were forcibly displaced from the Latroun area, East Jerusalem and the Jordan Valley to Jordan.

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Followers of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict are aware of the term “Nakba”, which literally means catastrophe and refers to the war that took place between 1947-1949 and resulted in the uprooting of more than 80% of the Palestinian population that had inhabited the area on which Israel was built for centuries. While the Nakba represented a catastrophic historic event in the collective consciousness of the Palestinian people, it was followed only 19 years later by another horrific war which resulted in the displacement of a quarter to one third of the Palestinian population and the beginning of a new era in which the whole of it got to live under a complex Israeli regime. This additional event got to be known as “the Naksa”, which can be translated as a serious quick escalation of an earlier catastrophe.

The Naksa happened in and after a war that took only six days between Israel on the one hand, and a number of Arab countries surrounding, resulting in a relatively easy victory of Israel and the occupation of territories that were under the sovereignty or administration of its neighbouring states. Although the hostilities of the war itself were quick and not that widespread, the displaced persons from the occupied Palestinian Territory were hundreds of thousands. In other words, the number of Palestinians displaced in that war was out of proportion.

This can be understood only by explaining the ideological background that has, since the Nakba, been informing military, legislative and administrative Israeli operation. As discovered by a stream of Israeli historians who researched Israeli archives covering the Nakba period, and others who researched early Zionist leader's legacy, the displacement of the Palestinian people away from Palestine was seen as part of the solution to the Jewish problem. Since Zionists wanted to create a Jewish state in an area where Jews were a minority, tilting this demographic balance to favour Jews was only possible by the combination of colonising the land with Jews and moving Palestinians out of the same land.

A DEMOGRAPHIC WAR

When the war took place in 1967, Zionist leaders saw this as an opportunity to make some demographic changes in the occupied territory as a whole and in certain areas in particular. During and immediately after the war, some quarter a million to 420,000 Palestinians were displaced from their homes. ¹ This happened through war operations and was cemented by making some regulatory interventions that prevented the displaced persons from returning to their homes.

LATROUN AND EAST JERUSALEM AS STRATEGIC AREAS

During the war operations, Israel focused its displacement activities in certain areas of strategic importance. One of the most significant was the

eviction of three villages near the central Latrun area at the western edge of the West Bank, close to the Israeli border, resulting in the displacement of 10,000 civilians.² Latroun looks on the map like a finger sticking out the West Bank body, which Israel failed to occupy in the 1948 war. The villages in the Latroun area continued to be populated until the 1967 war, when Israel forcibly expelled the whole population and demolished every single building. The lands that belong to the Latroun villages were later turned into a park called Canada Park, and an Israeli settlement was also built on part of the lands. In addition, Israel built part of its rail line on another part of the lands from which the refugees were displaced.

The evictions of the areas at the edge of the Israel-West Bank borders included more villages and towns. The villages of Bayt Marsam, Bat 'Awa, Habla, Jiftlik and Al-Burj were all destroyed³, together with a significant part of the town of Qalqilyah. Similarly, as soon as Israel controlled the Jerusalem area, it evacuated the Arab residents of the ancient Al-Magharbeh Quarter in the old city and demolished all of their houses leaving them homeless. The residence neighbourhood houses has been an endowment for centuries, and Palestinian families have resided there since then. Israeli officials saw that the opportunity of the war was one that should be taken advantage of to clear this area and open the space in front of the Western Wall, a Jewish holy site in Jerusalem. Similarly, 4,000 Palestinians were evicted from the Jewish Quarter of Jerusalem, but the houses were not demolished as the displaced Palestinians were replaced later by Jewish inhabitants.⁴

TO THE OTHER SIDE OF THE JORDAN RIVER

Another area of strategic importance was the Jordan Valley, which is the border between the West Bank and the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan. During the war, Israel displaced 88% of the population of that area. The first to be driven out of the area were refugees who had been displaced from what became Israel in the aftermath of the 1948 war.⁵ The residents of three refugee camps in the area were all expelled or fled to Jordan, in addition to half of the native population of the area.

Also in the aftermath of the war, Israel managed to get rid of 200,000 Palestinians by organising buses departing from Jerusalem and other parts of the West Bank to the borders with Jordan, and forcing those going there to sign a document declaring that they are leaving the country voluntarily.⁶ While some of the residents left voluntarily, a former soldier explained that a significant part was forced deportation. He mentioned:

Although there were those deportees who were leaving voluntarily, but there were also not a few people who were simply expelled. We forced them to sign. I will tell you how exactly this was conducted: a bus was arriving and only men were getting off . . . We were told that these were saboteurs . . . and it would be better that they would be outside the state. They did not want to leave, but were dragged from the bus while being kicked and hit by revolver butts. By the time they arrived to my stall, they were usually already completely blurred at this stage and did not care much about signing. It seemed to them part of the process. In many cases, the violence used against them was producing desirable results from our point of view. The distance between the border point and the bridge was about 100 metres and out of fear they were crossing to the other side running; the border guards and the paratroopers were all the time in the vicinity. When someone refused to give me his hand [for fingerprinting] they came and beat him badly. Then I was forcibly taking his thumb, immersing it in ink and finger printing him. This way the refuseniks were removed. . . I have no doubt that tens of thousands of men were removed against their will.⁷

“THIN OUT” THE PALESTINIAN POPULATION

This operation, as noticed by Masalha, has not received much attention, probably because it did not involve dramatic military operations and evictions like the case in the Latroun villages or Qalqilya. However, it actually came into public discourse and started to receive attention when Haim Hertzog, who organised this operation after the war while serving as the first military governor of the West Bank, proudly announced in 1991 that he managed to quietly transfer 200,000 Palestinians by using this method.

In conclusion, we can see that the Israeli occupation forces acted upon the desire to, as Masalha expresses it, “thin out” the Palestinian population in the occupied territory. This has resulted in a large number of refugees and internally displaced persons. After the displacement took place, Israel cemented it with some regulatory tools that resulted in sustaining the exile.

These regulatory tools included first preventing all those who were absent when the war took place as well as those who became refugees or displaced beyond the borders of Palestine from their right to live in their homes. They did so by bringing forth new residency statuses for East Jerusalem, the West Bank and Gaza Strip and giving it only to those counted by the census that Israel itself took in the occupied territory. It intentionally excluded those who were displaced and those who happened to be abroad from this status.

Furthermore, the Israeli military government in the West Bank and Gaza issued military orders according to which it considered any unauthorised entry to the occupied territory illegal, and punished this action by a number of measures including deportation.

All these policies resulted in a continued displacement of these individuals and their families most of whom have not been able to return to Palestine until the current day. In addition, many more Palestinians have joined these victims after they suffered from Israel’s continuous displacement measures, locally known as the continuous Nakba. These measures include residency revocation, restrictions on child registration, home demolitions, and many others.

No just peace can come about without resolving the plight of the refugees of both 1948 and 1967 wars as well as those who were displaced by the Israeli regime after that. More importantly, peace can only be established and cemented by tackling the Israeli ideological motivations for creating such a displacement problem.

1 The exact number of those displaced by the war is not known exactly. Soon after the end of the war, the UN Secretary General estimated the number to be almost 255,000 Palestinian displaced persons, in addition to 110,000 Syrians from the occupied Golan Heights. See, UN General Assembly, Report of the Secretary-General Under General Assembly Resolution 2252 (ES-V) and Security Council Resolution 237 (1967), September 15, 1967, para. 159, UN Doc. A/6797. Also issued under the symbol S/8158. The Commissioner-General of the UNRWA estimated the number to be 300,000 with 120,000 among them being refugees from the 1948 war displaced for the second time. See UNRWA, Report of the Commissioner General of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (1 July 1996- 30 June 1997) (UN General Assembly, June 30, 1997), para. 1. CA 22nd session official record (30 June 1997). UN Doc. A/6713; Bailey put the number at 300,000 among them 113,000 refugees who had been displaced in 1948.

2 Nur Masalha, *A Land without a People: Israel, Transfer and the Palestinians, 1949-96*, Faber & Faber, 1997.

3 U.N. General Assembly, Report of the Secretary-General Under General Assembly Resolution 2252 (ES-V) and Security Council Resolution 237 (1967), para. 65-72; Masalha, *The Politics of Denial: Israel and the Palestinian Refugee Problem*, 198.

4 Rashid Khalidi, “The Future of Arab Jerusalem,” *British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies* 19, no. 2 (January 1992): 139-40.

5 UNRWA, Report of the Commissioner General of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (1 July 1996-30 June 1997), para. 30; Masalha, *The Politics of Denial: Israel and the Palestinian Refugee Problem*, 203; Quigley, “Family Reunion and the Right to Return to Occupied Territory,” 225.

6 Nur Masalha, *The Politics of Denial*, *ibid*.

7 *Ibid*. All the data up to the end of the article are from this book.



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College Crisis Caused by Judicial Activism

The crisis in college sports is having a ripple effect, causing colleges to eliminate programs, which then decreases their enrollment as fewer students have a reason to go there. As enrollment declines, colleges go out of business, and at least a quarter of colleges teeter on bankruptcy even during good times.

In April, President Trump issued an executive order explaining that “financial perils” caused by the crisis in college sports “could impact [colleges’] capabilities and responsibilities as Federal contractors and grantees,” and also that the “health of the university system is integral to the Federal Government’s basic functioning.”

A federal court in California caused this crisis by allowing a class action on behalf of college athletes seeking compensation, and then approving a \$2.8 billion payout to college athletes dating back to 2016. Known as the “House settlement,” this includes a whopping \$750 million payout to attorneys which neither colleges nor the NCAA can afford.

With the exception of men’s basketball and football, college sports programs are money-losers that serve the purpose of attracting enrollment in the college. The judicial activism from a federal court against college sports is bringing down entire colleges in the collapse.

This class action lawsuit is on appeal to the Ninth Circuit in San Francisco. Seven different groups of athletes are appealing, including women who receive almost none of the back pay, men in underappreciated sports like wrestling, and walk-on athletes who made their college team as many aspire to do.

College enrollment depends on the opportunity for all students to try to make the team in their favorite sports, without having been recruited in high school. The movie *Rudy* featured a walk-on who tried out and made the Notre Dame football team, and is considered one of the greatest sports movies ever made.

For more than a century, college sports worked well by keeping professionals out, and students played for the love of the game, not money. “I’d like to go exactly back to what we had and ram it through a court,” Trump said in

March, and his instincts are right.

He could do that by intervening in the “House” litigation. Trump’s Solicitor General who represents the U.S. in the Supreme Court, John Sauer, was himself a “walk-on” college wrestler who became the team captain at Duke, and he could argue for a return to allowing colleges to keep compensation out of their sports.

The Senate Commerce Committee held a hearing on June 3 for the misnamed Protect College Sports Act, which would mandate as federal law the opposite of what has long worked. This new federal law would force colleges to allow compensation for players by allowing them to take money for their name, image, or likeness (NIL), to the detriment of team spirit.

The Protect College Sports Act would micromanage college sports in additional ways, such as adopting team roster size limits, which makes it harder for a student to become a walk-on. This bill would place wage controls on the compensation of agents who will negotiate lucrative contracts for a few students, when there should not be any agents or compensation at all in college sports that thrived with amateur athletes.

This federal bill would prohibit the two most successful conferences, the Southeastern Conference (SEC) and the Big Ten, from expanding or merging. Never before has a federal law interfered with private associations like this.

A generation ago, college was part of the American Dream. College sports attracted students and donations by alumni, and millions of students obtained a good education and a solid foundation for the rest of their lives by attending college to play sports.

The federal lawsuit encourages NCAA Division I colleges to pay their players \$20 million annually, but for most schools the money simply isn’t there. Most sports do not have a sizable television audience and will be eliminated, to save money to pay a handful of top basketball and football players who have little interest in academics.

Even before this court-ordered \$2.8 billion burden on colleges, many were already going out of business. A study by the Federal Reserve Bank of Philadelphia predicted in

2024 that as many as 80 colleges might close in the next five years.

Last year 28 colleges went out of business, and during the past eight years more than 100 colleges have closed. The Huron Consulting Group found that roughly 25% of the private, nonprofit universities and colleges could close or merge in the next ten years.

Congress could help college sports by allowing a return to the amateur model, thereby ending what Trump has described as an “out-of-control financial arms race.” The Trump Administration could also stop granting visas to foreign athletes to play on college teams, which worsens this “arms race.”