

The Republic's Survival

by Robert Teesdale, to his young son

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To my dear son,

In the final days of the twentieth century, our Republic stands with fatal and dangerous pause on the brink of infected rot.

When I was your age I, too, spent my days in happy play and painting; in the love of my mother's arms and in the wonder of fresh knowledge. I knew nothing of the sport of Men, and of the plays they made for power and control in the world.

I, too, depended on the strength and protection of my parents to handle the issues of national life that I was a bare innocent in the path of.

Today, on your first day of school, I am at home writing this letter with a heavy and worried heart. Our Republic is no longer the unified bulwark of freedom that it once was. The dignity of office... the respect for law... and the commitment to spreading the shining and brilliant love of freedom that we based our lives upon, has slowly but surely been transformed into an ignorant and careless abrogation of our duties and responsibilities.

I look to the future of our nation, and I am grim in foreboding for the threats that you will face. They will be very different from mine.

When we feared the sudden incandescence of nuclear suns dawning across the land, it was in the knowledge that our Republic was united still, and facing the dangers of outside hate with a solid and unswerving heart.

I fear that on the morrow, when your day has arrived and you must take up the mantle of leadership, that you will face these dangers hamstrung by the death of the Republic that enabled freedom to grow and flourish across the world.

The fall of nations can often be traced to the casual and careless abandonment of duty and responsibility which often accompanies prosperity and peace. I pray that I will be able to teach you this, and to instill in you an understanding of the true nature of Men, and of the myriad tangles they weave in the grasp for temporal power.

The rebirth of America will lie on your shoulders, and on the shoulders of friends who share today with you the laughter, the games, and the happy shouts of childhood. In your future those shouts will transform into the screams of war, and the games will become the manipulations of authority that accompany the struggle for control.

You must, my son, strive to attain an understanding of these things as you grow into a man. For the life of our Republic, and the nation for which we stand, cannot survive otherwise.

We see new Senators calling for the dismantling of our Constitution, and for the change of our representative government into officially sanctioned mob rule. We see our leaders commit disgusting crimes in the face of our people, and explain away the consequences by the definition of simple words.

I see the active promotion of ignorance in America, and the willing destruction of our nation so that partisan attachments may be solidified.

My son, you must grow in the knowledge that our freedom is more important than anything.

Your liberty and rights are more important than your safety, and more critical to your happiness than wealth or comfort.

I pray that you will never feel that they are somehow guaranteed to you by the beneficence of other men.

The Republic cannot survive without this understanding.

And the light of freedom that seeds hope in the hearts and minds of billions... the promise of America, and the fundamental justice of free conscience and rule of law that we swear by... cannot survive without the Republic.

So as this millennium draws to a close, I pray that you will find this knowledge, and this strength, to maintain the principles of America in your own life - and in the future of our shared nation. There is no better struggle, and no more essential one to the race of Men.

I love you very much. And I pray, too, that my own example as your father can pave the way for you. I will stumble from time to time, as we all do. But on this one matter you must *never* flinch:

Your liberty is not negotiable.

All my love,