

MR. PRESIDENT AND FELLOW CITIZENS:

When an humble and obscure individual emerges into life, and by his virtues, genius, and mighty powers of intellect, can successfully grapple with the gigantic force which education and the favorable force of circumstances have placed in a nation or community, too much credit cannot be awarded to him for the solution of the problem of the capacity of mind when drawn out by indefatigable labors. Into such hands important trusts, or the proper disposition of any great subject, may rest with great safety. But to my mind, when not only obscurity, but incompetency, take hold of subjects, calling forth the powers of a great mind, in order to make a proper disposition of them, vain would be any attempts to avoid criticism, if not merited rebuke. When a true friend of universal liberty, one who has labored to enforce its great principles, vacates his place by death, cold must be the patriotism of that people that pass in silence his mighty deeds. In view of this duty, with the probable failure of a public demonstration on our part, I accepted the too responsible position of delivering this eulogy.

Our friend, fellow citizens, is dead!  
Did I say ours? Let me take that word

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back. The friend of man, of the human race, has departed; and while we have assembled to speak of his goodness, and lament over his icy remains, the remains of a departed spirit, and touch upon some of the past acts of his honored career, that one of the brightest stars should have been blotted out at this important crisis of our country's history. While we have assembled here for this ostensible purpose, may we not forget that in his death there is one cause for rejoicing? Probably I may more effectively impress it by repeating the following stanza, by

Mozart:

"Spirit, thy labor is o'er,  
Thy day of probation is run;  
Thy steps are now bound to the untrodden shore,  
And the race of immortals begun.

Spirit! look not on the strife  
Or the pleasure of earth with regret;  
Pause not on the bounds of limitless life,  
To moan for the day that is set.

Spirit! no fetters can bind,  
No wicked have power to molest;  
There the weary, like thee, the wretched, shall find  
A heaven, a mansion of rest.

Spirit! how bright is the road  
For which thou art now on the wing!  
Thy home it will be with thy Saviour and God,  
There loud hallelujahs to sing."

We have no reason to doubt that when he put on immortality, death was swallowed up in victory. Oppressed humanity, regardless of clime or con-

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dition, has lost one of its uncompromising advocates. It is true, that often there might be found in him, and particularly while battling in the councils of the nation against slaveholding and pro-slavery influences combined, many errors of what I regard as of the head, as regarded the wisdom of the policy of his procedure, or measures recommended; still, throughout his whole life, we have every reason to believe the sincerity of his purpose, that he had an honest heart—a heart ever ready to act in concert where he believed the premises correct and their application judicious. When brought in contact with those maintaining opposite views to his own in regard to action, when in the main they were agreed, you never found him cherishing that direful bane of political profligacy, so eagerly cherished by aspirants for fame, who, for the sake of realizing their ambitious desires, suffer, in their guilty phantasy, any institution to be overthrown, if in its demolition, the pathway to the goal of their aspiration might be shortened. In John Quincy Adams there was no such spirit. In him was a mind and heart upon which the mildew of moral depravity had never settled or marred the features of that godlike attribute of his nature. In the family circle, in the

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public gatherings of his native State, or in the councils of the nation, that principle of the largest liberty, was his principle; the affirmative godspeed to every just and honest movement to effect it, was his affirmation; that belief in the reforms of the age which held so near an alliance to his own, but upon whose platform he never directly made his assaults upon the enemy, was nevertheless a subject of increasing interest to him; so much so, that single handed and alone, amid sarcasm and rebuke, threats and persuasions, the knife and the bullet, has the right of the oppressed and the right of petition had an unflinching advocate. Thus onward was his career, unintimidated in his purpose; and although he is dead, his principles live, and live to do battle where his self-sacrificing labors wrought them out. It was mainly through his influence that the sacred right of petition had been sustained, and the discussion on the subject of slavery in the United States reached such prominence by his labors, at a time when it required more moral stamina than was possessed by any other on that floor; and at the present time no fear need ever be entertained of expelling it from among the subjects of deliberation, until the

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trial is complete and the end gained.—  
I am aware of some of his sentiments  
disavowing his connection with the  
abolition society, as the name is ap-  
plied—a society which I hold dear, be  
it of what school it may.

We have extant, in one of his  
speeches on a subject in some way con-  
nected with slavery, a full exposition of  
his views, and as he lived them out.—  
His remarks on that occasion were  
these: “I am not here to answer for the  
purposes or views of any abolition  
society, or of any individual abolition-  
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Thomas Jefferson, in the 27th year of  
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son, you will find the sentiment avowed,  
word for word, as I have stated it,—  
‘Fate,’ he further adds, ‘has decreed  
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English language, and all other languages; when there shall not be found a slave upon all the earth. This, is my judgment, will be the consummation of the Christian religion. That will be the long hoped for day, when the lion shall lie down with the lamb, and when all the glorious prophecies of the Old Testament promises and predictions repeated by Christ, shall receive their complete fulfillment. In that day I believe man will be a nobler, a purer, a more elevated being by far, than we see him now, when he will approach nearer the angels.' " In that sense, he avowed himself an abolitionist. He then goes on to speak of the animadversions and denunciations directed against him, but instead of reviling again, he said that there were "men in the abolition societies of as much intelligence, as much virtue, as high rectitude, and as ardent patriotism, as is possessed by any on this floor." Still he says as to their measures, he thinks they are mistaken, as no doubt they think the same of him— But I do not propose to descant upon any of what I may consider erroneous views in regard to his mode of action. I simply give the opinions he entertained, which he said he held from God, and from his own judgment. Then

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pointing to the Declaration of Independence, which was hanging in the hall, he said, in that, too, were those sentiments, however any portion of it may have been turned out of doors— Through it, he wished the abolition of slavery throughout this Union, and that he believed it was indispensable for its preservation. They are glorious sentiments, worthy of the heart that gave them utterance, worthy to be promulgated in the age in which we live, and worthy of the people who cherish them.

Time forbids me to go at length into the history of his life in one address, unless I forgo comments. I shall therefore be brief on this point. John Q. Adams was born in 1767, consequently was at his death in his 81st year. His remote ancestor, Henry Adams, came to America 218 years ago, with seven sons. Samuel was the first who emerged into public life, and rose to conspicuous public stations. The next that we read of was John Adams, whom Thomas Jefferson pronounced the Colossus of Independence. He was the father of John Q. Adams; and history informs us that, while in the dawn of his existence, his parents were exerting every power in behalf of their country's freedom. In his eleventh

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year, when his father and Franklin went to France as joint commissioners, he accompanied them, and spent one and a half years of daily intercourse under the parental attention of Benjamin Franklin, whose kind attention, simplicity of manner and habits left a lasting impression. At the expiration of that time, he returned home with his father, who came to assist in the formation of the Constitution of his native State. But a very few months elapsed before the voice of the country again called his father to repair Europe, to negotiate a treaty of peace, whenever Great Britain might be disposed to put an end to the war. He again took his son with him. In this voyage, the vessel came nigh being lost, but finally landed at Fenell, in Spain, from whence they travelled by land to Paris, in 1780, when his son, John Q., was placed at school. The same year his father was called to Holland. Accompanying him thither, he was placed in the public school of the city of Amsterdam, and afterwards in the university at Leden. In 1781, when Francis Dana was commissioned Minister to the Empress of Russia, John Q. Adams was selected by him as a Private Secretary. After spending fourteen months, he left Mr. Dana, to travel through Sweden, Den-

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mark, Hamburg, and Bremen, to Holland, where his father was the Minister to the Republic of the Netherlands.— He performed this journey alone, in the winter, without a companion, at 16 years of age. But I must pass over many important events of his life. His renewed acquaintance with Jefferson, and their continued intimacy to the close of Jefferson's life; his desire to leave the city of splendor and gaiety, while his father was Minister to the Court of St. James; of his returning to this country, and becoming a member of the ancient seat of learning at Cambridge; his study of the law, &c., are facts of lively interest.

He was a great favorite of General Washington, and filled offices of trust under his appointment. In 1794, Gen. Washington appointed him (then but 27 years of age, Minister to the Netherlands; and one the last acts of Gen. Washington's administration was to appoint Mr. Adams Minister Plenipotentiary to Portugal. Washington declared to him be the most valuable public officer the United States had abroad.

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In 1825, Mr. Adams was elected President of the United States. But his pure principles and anti-party spirit soon led to dissensions, and all kinds of political chicanery were practised against him; but he held his position with an unalterable firmness, distributing the offices of public trust irrespective of party. The nation at peace with the world, the interest on the public debt promptly paid, and reducing the public debt over three million[s], these, with many other marked and beneficial results, closed his administration, and he was succeeded in office by Gen. Jackson.

Since that period, his life must be familiar to all who have taken any notice of the public movements of the age. His manly independence in the advocacy of equal rights, against fearful odds, and the unparalleled, unyield-

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ing firmness to principle, leaves him no equal, to say the least, among the political champions of the age. I am bold to affirm that your Websters, your Clays, your Calhouns, or your McDuffies, if you please, when compared with him, sink into perfect insignificance. In the life of John Q. Adams, the world can see in what true greatness consists. In him the spirit of vacillation, for the sake of preferment, was unknown. Unlike the dishonored source of Daniel Webster, who declared, on the portico of the Capitol of Virginia, before an assemblage of ten thousand freemen, that there was no power, direct or indirect, in Congress, or the general Government, to interfere in any manner whatever with the subject of slavery, or the institutions of the South—a very hard sample of true greatness to come from the great expounder of the Constitution. Neither do we hear more substantial or better reasoning from the mouth of the idolized Kentucky logician. He would have the world believe that the liberation of six thousand slaves in the District of Columbia, disconnected with the three millions in the country, was not a matter of suffi-

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cient magnitude to agitate, distract, and embitter this great confederacy, while he denounces and contemns what he calls a visionary dogma, that slaves cannot be the subjects of property.— Why, he says he will not speculate on such abstractions; that is property which the law declares to be property; two hundred years of legislation have sanctioned it. But not only so, he says it has *sanctified* negro slavery. McDuffie says slavery is the corner-stone of the Republic. But I will quote no further, feeling satisfied that the verdict is in favor of John Q. Adams. Permit me to remark here, that I have no doubt but what I shall be censured for the encomiums which I have passed upon Mr. Adams; but if I had never known it before, I am now convinced, from research into his life and character, that all such censure would merit just rebuke. In fact, I have already been asked what [slave] was in the life of John Q. Adams so commendable that the colored people need eulogize it, as if we possessed so small a share of humanity, or that there flowed in our veins so small a share of patriotic blood, or that we were insensible to, or illy appreciated, the great design of our forefathers, as well as our own inherited birthright from them.

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world know that the same principles of '76, which led to the great mind of John Q. Adams to energetic action, to advise in behalf of his country to throw off the British yoke, actuated my father to shoulder his musket and serve through a bloody contest. And not only my father's but the blood of colored men was freely shed in that struggle for national independence. John Q. Adams never proved recreant to that great principle, but maintained it through life. Can it be supposed that we have within us a principle so complicated, so incomplete in its original design, that we can only appreciate the value of a man and speak of his virtues, only as they are prescribed for our own individual benefit? If such were the prevailing sentiments, God deliver me from identity with any such people. But this is not the case; and were this a proper occasion, I would prove that for true patriotism, and high-toned sympathy for their fellow men, we, the colored people, have no superior among any class of men. I base my abolition on the doctrine of universal freedom. My field of action is the world; wherever there can be found beings possessing undying, imperishable and immortal spirits, regardless of the land that gave

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them birth, they in like proportion share my sympathy, and shall have my support. I would not give one of the most imperfect ideas which I have penned in this discourse for the fig-leaf covering of that man's love of liberty that extends no further than what I discovered in a debate, a few weeks since, from one of the members of the bar in this city. He was opposed to the accession of new slave territory, for the reason that he loved the liberties of the white man; then a sober second thought coming over him, produced, no doubt, by the presence of colored men, he made the sentiment more ridiculous, by saying, not that he *hated* the black man. But I suppose it is a sample of much of the Wilmot Proviso abolitionism. I have long become selfish in any good work; and when I see this spring up, immutable laws of God must be brought to bear against it, for we are equally bound to each other in the distribution of our powers. Instead of trying to degrade, we should encourage and improve. Rather than withhold, contract, and disrespect the rights of each other, we should enlarge and expand to greater and still greater degrees of benevolence. This undue regard which is practised in the social system, must be redressed, or we never shall avert the

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just judgment of the Almighty; and I am bold to affirm, that if there is not a speedy ushering in of reform on this point, it will most assuredly come down with increased vehemence on all who throw off such mighty responsibilities. It is a sad demonstration of the mean [ness] into which man has [sunk] since the fall.

But to return. As regards the errors into which statesmen have fallen, I give it as my candid opinion, that it would be far more advantageous to the Republic, if the management of its affairs were entrusted in the hands of those who had not studied the first lesson in the affairs of state, if they were honest and true, rather than in the hands of those who entertain and practise sentiments like those I have already quoted. There was a principle in John Q. Adams which soared so far above such sentiments, that he shrunk from no responsibility or regarded the issue, whenever he was convinced he was right. He never suffered himself to become the passive tool of the petty tyrant. The ancestral blood of the Pilgrims had early germinated, and assumed such lofty mien, that it through life forbade the engrafting into his nature the modern ideas of expediency.— But he was as firm as the rock on

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which the Pilgrims landed, and rigid as the wintry monarch which was above and around them. The Pilgrims landed on the 22d December, amid ice and snow. He, like Ramesis, King of Egypt, when about to elevate his great obelisk, placed his son upon it, in order that the workmen might take great care, knowing that a life more precious than their own depended upon their labors. Such was the feeling of John Q. Adams. He acted as if the burden of the responsibility of the whole nation was resting upon his shoulders.— In this light he acted, and literally died pleading for the salvation of his country. O! methinks that when the last sound proceeded from the lips of that good old man, while dying away in the remote corners of that spacious hall, there was sent back a reverberating echo, which, as it fell upon the listening ear, told, in accents not to be mistaken, that that voice would soon be hushed; that that honored head which was bowing under the infirmities of more than eighty winters, bespoke incontrovertibly that the sand of his probation were spent. And methinks then, if not before, the heart of the despot must have been filled with sorrow to think that soon his own would be hushed, and his name never more be written

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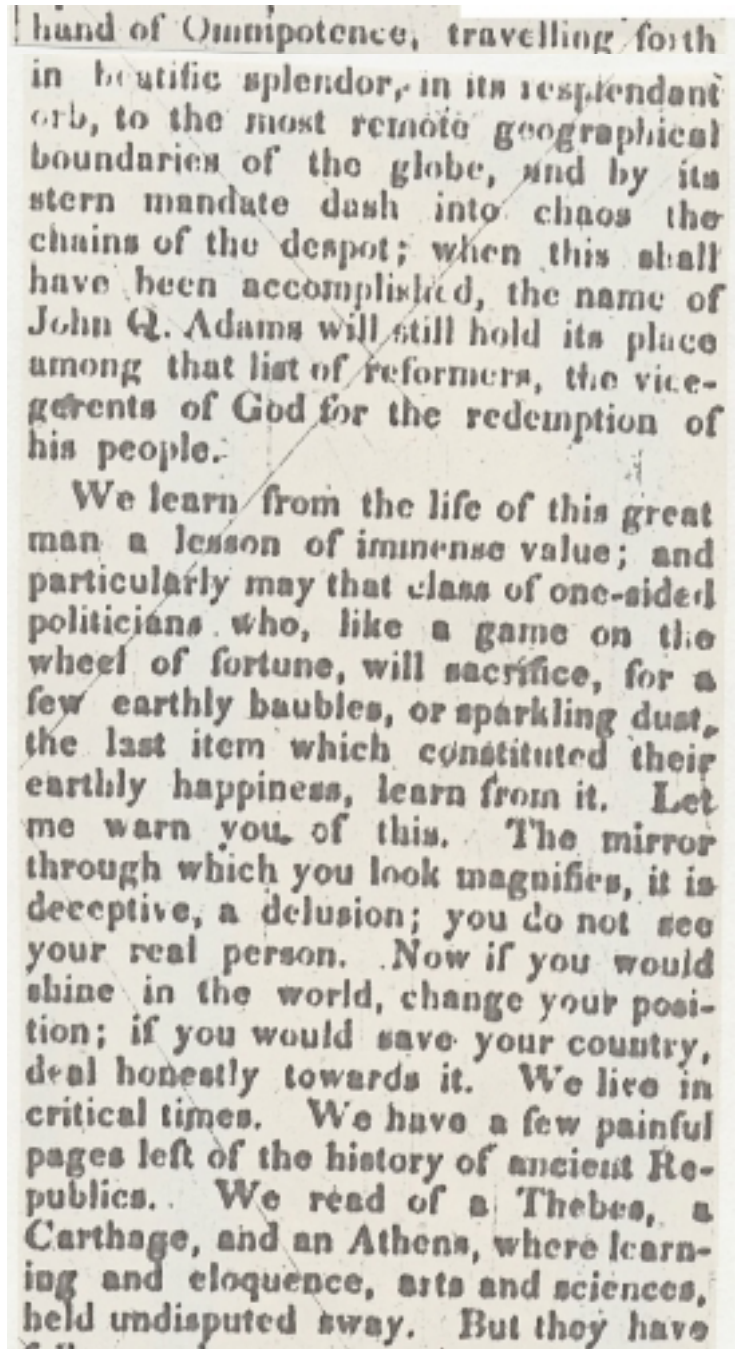


among the members of that body, but that the next union would be registered by the recording angel. And when the stern decree of justice shall have submerged the last vestige of slavery, and saved not only this nation, but the poor sin-stricken world, from having meted out to her the just judgments of the Almighty, for their national sins and national calamities which they propagated; when the labors of the abolition societies shall receive their everlasting acquittal, on the basis that there is no more work to accomplish, or when labors like the great departed statesman performed when upon the earth, shall come to an end; because then the oppressor can no more oppress, and the assembled wisdom of the nations shall have no more to do but to legislate to make man assimilate nearer and nearer his Redeemer; then the name of John Q. Adams will be revered. In short, when the great end for which he lived shall have been fully consummated—when the great struggle, so incomplete in its design, and through which he lived and labored incessantly to achieve, shall be in reality what it now is in name; when the day-star from on high shall emblazon forth, inscribed upon it in imperishable letters by the

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hand of Omnipotence, traveling forth in beautiful splendor, in its resplendent orb, to the most remote geographical boundaries of the globe, and by its stern mandate dash into chaos the chains of the despot; when this shall have been accomplished, the name of John Q. Adams will still hold its place among that list of reformers, the [vice-]gerents of God for the redemption of his people.

We learn from the life of this great man a lesson of immense value; and particularly may that class of one-sided politicians who, like a game on the wheel of fortune, will sacrifice, for a few earthly baubles, or sparkling dust, the last item which constituted their earthly happiness, learn from it. Let me warn you of this. The mirror through which you look magnifies, it is deceptive, a delusion; you do not see your real person. Now if you would shine in the world, change your position, if you would save your country, deal honestly towards it. We live in critical times. We have a few painful pages left of the history of ancient Republics. We read of a Thebes, a Carthage, and an Athens, where learning and eloquence, arts and sciences, held undisputed sway. But they have



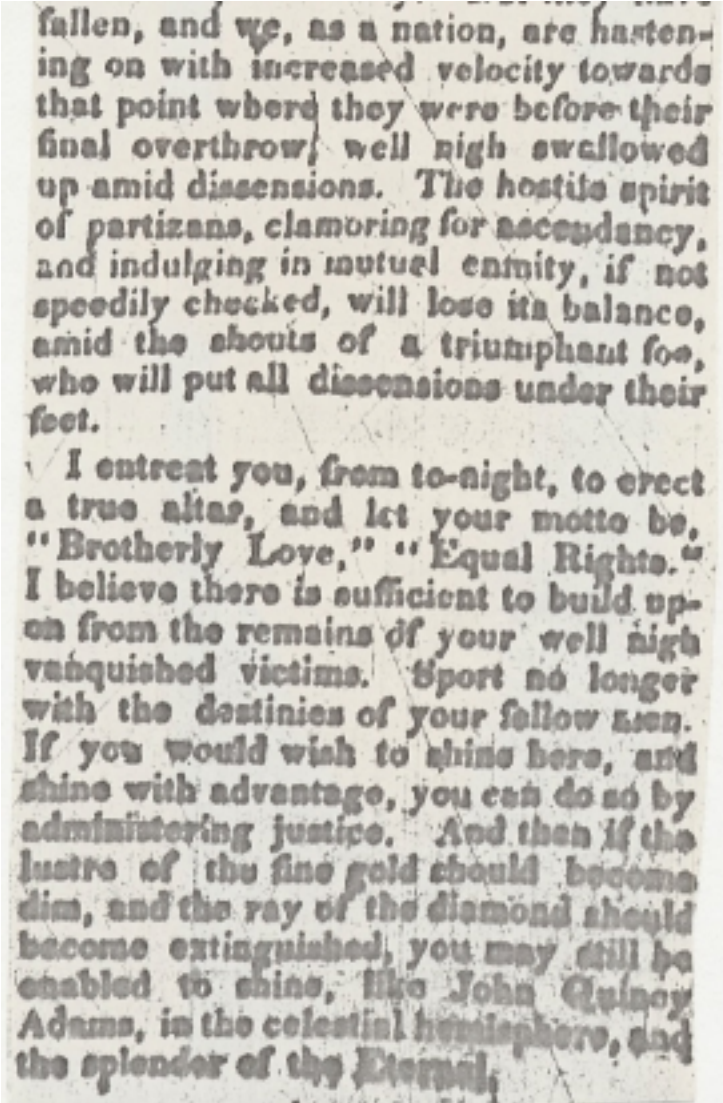
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fallen, and we, as a nation, are hastening on with increased velocity towards that point where they were before their final overthrow, well nigh swallowed up amid dissensions. The hostile spirit of partizans, clamoring for ascendancy, and indulging in mutual enmity, if not speedily checked, will lose its balance, amid the shouts of a triumphant foe, who will put all dissensions under their feet.

I entreat you, from to-night, to erect a true altar, and let your motto be, "Brotherly Love," "Equal Rights." I believe there is sufficient to build upon from the remains of your well nigh vanquished victims. Sport no longer with the destinies of your fellow man. If you would wish to shine here, and shine with advantage, you can do so by administering justice. And then if the lustre of the fine gold should become dim, and the ray of the diamond should become extinguished, you may still be enabled to shine, like John Quincy Adams, in the celestial hemisphere, and the splendor of the Eternal.



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