

Dear Virginia,

CARRY THE TORCH



Lady Liberty
The Statue of Liberty
La Liberté éclairant le monde
Liberty Enlightening the World.

Lady Liberty's torch is a symbol of enlightenment. It lights the way to freedom and down the path of liberty. The official title of the Statue of Liberty is actually "Liberty Enlightening the World."

The Statue of Liberty primarily symbolizes freedom and democracy. It was conceived as a gift from France to the United States in 1876 to commemorate the centennial of the American Declaration of Independence, the liberation of American slaves, and the enduring friendship between the two nations. Beyond its initial purpose, the Statue has become a universal symbol of hope, opportunity, and the fight for liberty, particularly for immigrants seeking a better life. There is a sonnet chiseled into her base which reads in part, "Give me your tired, your poor, your huddled masses yearning to breathe free." This excerpt from the Emma Lazarus poem "The New Colossus" defines the foundational American spirit, welcoming those from other lands to come and build a stronger United States.



**Stories, insights
and action for a
world that works
for all of us**

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*Justice is what love  
looks like in public.*

Jim Hightower

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Favorite Resources

[Fix the News](#)

(Future Crunch)

[Reasons to be Cheerful](#)

[Chop Wood, Carry](#)

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*We will and must  
resist and protest as  
long as it takes to get  
our democracy back*

~~~

The tablet in her left hand is the Declaration of Independence. She steps on chains with her right foot.

[More about the Statue of Liberty here.](#)

[And a really interesting YouTube about her here.](#)

This Month's Features



The torch we carry

We are the rising masses yearning to be free of a cruel, destructive tyrant and murderer. Murderer? It is estimated that the cuts the Trump regime has made to USAID will result in more than 14 million deaths in the next five years. About 4.5 million will be children under 5. **We carry the torch:** for the restoration of government services that protect the public's health and safety; for promoting clean energy and environmental protection; for voting rights for all; for the protection of immigrants and citizens from harassment, illegal arrests and inhumane treatment by the American Gestapo (i.e. ICE); for the freedom of speech; for constructive relations with our allies abroad; for honesty and truth-telling in government; for freedom from hate and fear; for community, compassion, respect and empathy; for peace; for our democracy.

I highly recommend this [interview on The Jim Acosta Show](#) with Heather Cox Richardson and Ezra Levin of Indivisible. It is informative, encouraging and hopeful. Well worth your time to understand why, as Americans, "We have an innate capacity to resist tyranny."—Jim Acosta



"The ICE Men Cometh"

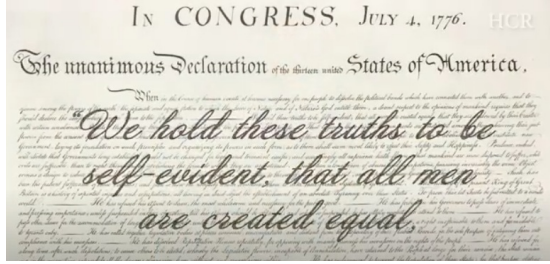
With a supercharged budget and a high quota imposed by the Trump administration of immigrants to round up and detain, ICE has become an aggressive and dangerous personal police force of the Trump regime. We need to be aware of the dangers and what we can do to stop this terrorist force.

Read: ["The ICE Men Cometh,"](#) by Jay Kuo.

Then watch this podcast as Simon Rosenberg, author of [Hopium Chronicles](#), interviews David Leopold, an attorney specializing in immigration, visas and citizenship issues. We are in a dangerous time, Leopold says. Our core values of fairness and humane treatment of all people and our Constitutional rights to due process are threatened daily. It is up to us to stop this violation. I encourage you to listen to this informative, [30 minute video](#). Our country is at stake.

Self-evident Truths

It is astonishing and sobering that many of the reasons the colonists wanted independence from Britain are the same for the millions of people who protest the



actions of our current Trump regime. The delegates to the Second Continental Congress wrote, **"We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among those are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of**

happiness." The authors rejected the very idea of a king. They said if those rights are threatened it is the right and duty of the people to throw off such a government.

The delegates listed 27 ways that King George III was destroying their liberties and violating their rights. Among those— in modern language—the king

Ignored the rule of law

Suppressed the vote

Stopped immigration

Militarized communities

Cut off trade with the rest of the world

Deprived people of due process and trial by jury

Deported people to other countries

***Read the [Declaration of Independence](#) here. It is well worth your time to read the delegates' list of 27 grievances.

*** Here is an excellent 5 minute YouTube by Heather Cox Richardson, ["The Journey to American Democracy,"](#) that summarizes how the Declaration came to be. I highly recommend it as well as other short videos by Cox Richardson.



Action Sites for Democracy and Our Planet

Given the continued threats to our democracy and our Earth, this resource guide lists our favorite sources of information, opportunities for action and hope. **We must protest as long as it takes to get our democracy back.**

Reclaiming and Protecting Our Democracy is Every Day

[Chop Wood, Carry Water, by Jessica Craven:](#) Provides daily actions for our democracy. Always encouraging.

[Steady, by Dan Rather:](#) Excellent commentary on current affairs.

[Today's Edition Newsletter, by Robert Hubbell:](#) Reflections on and summary of today's news.

[Letters from an American, by Heather Cox Richardson:](#) Commentary on current news.

[The Status Kuo, by Jay Kuo:](#) Commentary and analysis of today's news. (I recommend "Surviving the Next Four Years" for strategies such as: avoid doom and despair; be a voice of hope, not fear; unplug from network news; commit small acts of resistance." [Read here.](#))

[Hopium Chronicles, by Simon Rosenberg:](#) Current analysis and frequent interviews.

[Indivisible.org:](#) a good source for information on future rallies.

Climate Action: Every Action Counts!

[Climate Action Now!:](#) Subscribe and get an action to do every day, plus climate hope.

[100 Things You Can Do to Help in the Climate Crisis](#)

[15 Actions to Make a Difference](#)

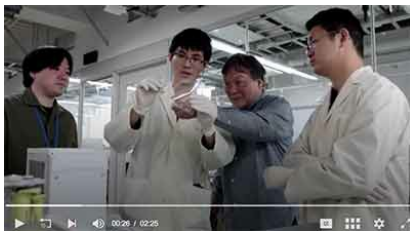
An old saying: We can all be the someone who is doing something.

All Kinds of Good News



EXTRA! EXTRA!

Last month I highlighted [Fix the News](#) as a source of positive news from around the world. This month I highly recommend Jessica Craven's [Chop Wood. Carry Water](#) for the same reason. During the week she publishes short commentary and actions you can take to defend our democracy. On Sunday she publishes *Extra! Extra!* which is an extensive list of good news that's happened in the US that we probably wouldn't hear about. Subscriptions are \$60/year; that's \$5 a month to pick up your spirits by reading all the good things that have taken place in this country to support people, the planet and our democracy. [Here's the latest edition..](#)



Dissolving Plastic

In a world drowning in plastic, scientists in Japan may have found a lifeline. Researchers from the RIKEN Center for Emergent Matter Science and the University of Tokyo have developed a new type of plastic that can dissolve in seawater within hours without leaving a trace. [Here's a very good video and the article.](#)



Restoration Projects

China: Through its “Beautiful Rivers and Lakes” program, China has restored over 200 river and lake ecosystems, improving water quality and reviving aquatic life. The initiative includes rewilding riverbanks, tackling non-point pollution (from farms and urban runoff), and promoting nature-based solutions in urban and rural areas alike. [Read more here.](#)

Europe: Last year Europe dismantled 542 dams, weirs, culverts, and sluices, aiding river restoration and biodiversity. This is an 11% increase from 2023, and involved 23 countries, with Finland, France, and Spain leading the way. [Here's the article.](#)

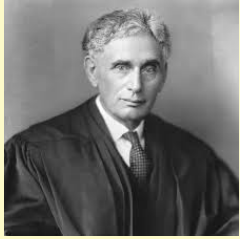


A stable climate is a human right

On 3 July 2025, the Inter-American Court of Human Rights issued an opinion that recognizes a human right to a stable climate and urges “urgent and effective” action to cut emissions, adapt and police climate-disinformation. [Read more here.](#)

Wisdom for Our Time

""We can have democracy in this country, or we can have great wealth concentrated in the hands of the few, but we can't have both".



“The most important political office is that of private citizen.”

—Justice Louis Brandeis, Associate Justice of the Supreme Court, 1916-1939

Stunning Landscapes



Stunning isn't the word for this amazing collection of 30 unbelievable landscapes and the remarkable photography that captured these moments. Savor each one and the beauty of our Earth. [See them here.](#)

*Have a fruitful and active August
Virginia/Gibi*



Hope will never be silent

Shortly after Congress passed the Big Ugly Bill Jessica Craven posted a piece that will give you a good idea of who she is and her mission. I've posted a portion of it in [my column](#).

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