

Editorial

An obligation to history

Important anniversaries invite us to reflect on two great moments in America's past: the drafting and passage of the Constitution, and the Civil War. Both occasions offer the opportunity to stir up renewed interest in history, and to remember that the American republic was founded and preserved by "patriots and world citizens," dedicated to setting an example and becoming a refuge for seekers of freedom throughout the world.

Celebrations have already begun for the 1987-89 bicentennial of the Constitution, which brought into being that "more perfect Union" for which many brave patriots had suffered or died in the 1776-83 Revolutionary War. Benjamin Franklin, George Washington, Alexander Hamilton, and the other founding fathers knew that the world's eyes were on them, and that only if they succeeded in framing and ratifying a Constitution that raised the Union above the states as the expression of a government dedicated to human progress through industrialization, could this, the first full-fledged republic, endure.

Against them were arrayed influential forces, committed to the vision of a confederation of agrarian states which would never industrialize, never support a large population, and certainly never be able to withstand Britain's determined economic (and later, military) warfare against its former colony.

This year also begins the 125th anniversary of the Civil War that wracked the United States from 1861 to 1864; its outcome saved the Union from a mortal threat while resolving a question left unsettled by the original Constitution, slavery. The threat had come from the same "state's rights" advocates who had opposed the Constitution earlier, and from British and continental European oligarchs and their "Boston Brahmin" colleagues who profited handsomely from the slave system of the South.

There were many dark moments in the early phase of the Civil War 125 years ago, after it became clear that the war would be long: when President Abraham Lincoln was deeply uncertain of victory, betrayed by generals who ranged from incompetent to treasonous,

undermined by oligarchist financial interests in the North, beset by the threat that Britain and France might recognize the Confederacy.

We are thrilled to see hundreds of Americans taking part in re-enactments and other activities that bring history alive for their families and fellow citizens. The care with which costumes are assembled, and details recreated of the lives of our forefathers, who sacrificed for future generations, has a unique potential to awaken in the populace the necessary *emotional* relationship to the past.

Yet, given that history has been replaced by "social science" and other drivel in most of our public schools, we must stress that it is not sufficient to assert that "both sides fought for their beliefs" in those great battles, as is frequently stated in modern-day commemorations.

Not all beliefs—however passionately and sincerely held—are equal; indeed, mankind owes an unfathomable debt to those leaders who identified the Good, and relentlessly made certain that it was the Good that triumphed on those two historic occasions.

It is especially important to stress this at a moment when the rights and principles affirmed in the Constitution, and rescued by the Union's victory in the Civil War, have been so flagrantly and persistently flouted, that a Commission of distinguished citizens of free countries around the world has been formed to probe these abuses in the United States.

As we warned at the time, the rule of law formally ended when the U.S. Senate condoned the "Abscam" frameup of Senator Harrison Williams in 1982. Today it is Lyndon LaRouche, the man most identified in the United States and abroad with the tradition of Franklin, Washington, and Lincoln, who has become the target of the lawless and powerful.

The Revolution and the Civil War were won for America not only by patriots on these shores, but by men and women who intervened from outside the United States because they knew the fight represented the only hope for the world. That is happening again; and the stakes have never been so high.