

# **ASCENT TO GREATNESS**

**Raymond F. McNair**



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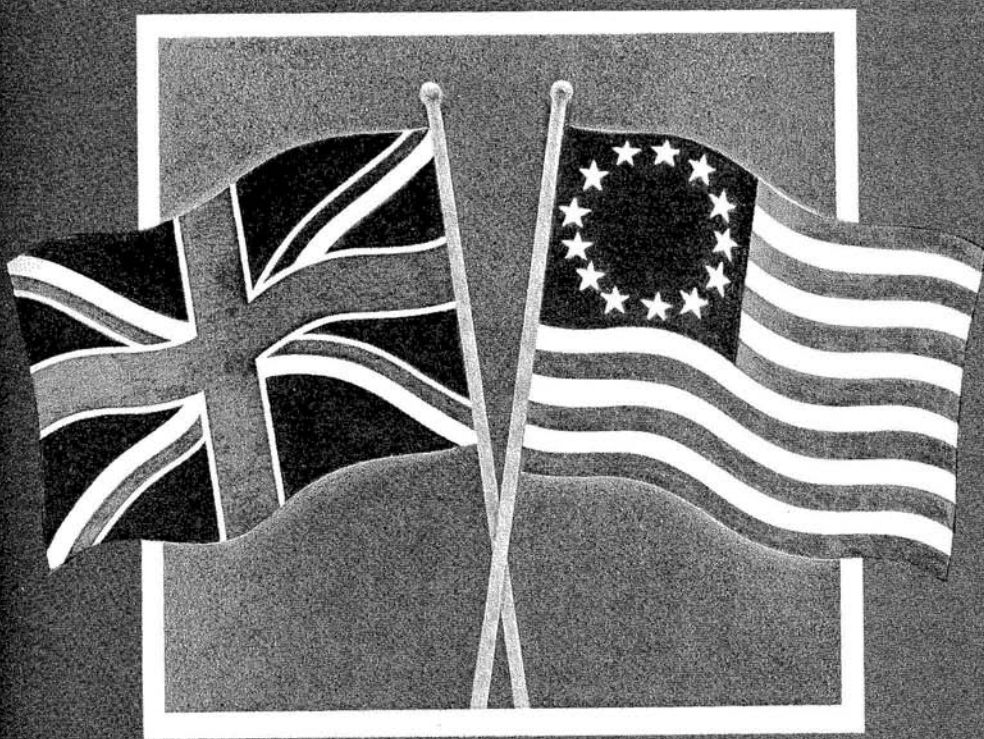
*In loving memory of my sister  
Margie Helen Meredith  
And  
To my wonderful children  
Ruth Angelyn  
Bruce David Andrew  
Raymond Joseph*

Those who tell the Americans of the future what the Americans of today and of yesterday have done will perforce tell much that is unpleasant. Nevertheless, when the tale is finally told, I believe that it will show that the forces working for good in our national life outweigh the forces working for evil, and that, with many blunders and shortcomings, with much halting and turning aside from the path, we shall yet in the end prove our faith by our works, and show in our lives our belief that righteousness exalteth a nation.

— Theodore Roosevelt

**BOOK I**

**BIRTH PANGS  
OF THE  
REPUBLIC**







## America at the Pinnacle

**W**inston S. Churchill, speaking at a dinner in his honor in New York on May 25, 1949, said that America had “arrived at the summit of the world.”

This 200-year-old nation is by far the richest and most powerful country on earth! Truly, America's ascent to greatness has placed the United States at the very pinnacle of power and prosperity. How did this all come about?

How did the thirteen struggling colonies become the world's super nation — with a GNP roughly double that of Russia?

How could this latecomer on the world scene rise meteorically to such an unprecedented pinnacle of economic and military dominance — dwarfing all other nations?

Is America's success story primarily the result of cleverly engineered American bootstrap philosophy? Did American ingenuity produce all this wealth and power?

Or has an Unseen Hand guided this nation unerringly from its inception in 1607 — when the struggling Jamestown colonists from England barely managed to establish the first permanent English foothold in the New World?

How different the course of world history would have been had Spain, France, or Russia come to dominate North America!

In 1493, Pope Alexander VI assigned to Spain all the land which later became Canada and the United States. Subsequently, Spaniards claimed Florida, much of the southern part of the U.S., and all of western America as far north as Canada.

In the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries Frenchmen explored much of North America and claimed vast territories for France. Later, Napoleon Bonaparte planned to establish a French Empire west of the Mississippi River — for the express purpose of counterbalancing the Anglo-Saxon dominated nation east of the Mississippi.

In the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries the Czars of Russia claimed Alaska and the western part of Canada. In 1812 the Russians even established a thriving colony in northern California. Russia, like Spain and France, coveted North America.

Holland and Sweden also made feeble attempts to create footholds in

North America in the early 1600s. But these Dutch and Swedish settlements were soon swallowed up by the English colonies. The Finns also began a trading station in North America during this period.

Spain, France and Russia all grasped for control and possession of North America, yet they all *failed!* But why?

Why did their attempts to gain control of this indescribably rich, virgin continent utterly collapse? How did it happen that the peoples of Britain, a tiny island nation of only 3 or 4 million people, gained possession of this fabulously wealthy land?

And did the Anglo-Saxon-Celtic-descended British succeed in acquiring this rich continent because of their cleverness, foresightedness, skill and cunning? Or did these British-descended peoples succeed in spite of themselves?

The true history of America — the account of how we became the earth's most affluent, most powerful nation — is a fascinating chronicle. The real struggle for national dominance in North America is a most interesting, yet little known, story. Many of the thrilling highlights of this American story have been very sadly misunderstood.

It is imperative that Americans be given the facts of their national success story as we — both during and in the years following our Bicentennial — reflect on the highlights of our history.

As a nation, America is still young. But she is no longer an infant or even an adolescent nation. We have come of age. We have matured. Some would even say we are “aging.” They see in us many social wrinkles of injustice. Gray hairs of moral decadence, they say, are everywhere in evidence.

Some even go so far as to claim that this once virgin land — like its once virtuous peoples — has lost most of its virtue. Greedy Americans have ravished, despoiled and polluted their lovely land.

Some radicals and extremists are even preparing to destroy America through the convulsive blows of a bloody revolution. To them, our beloved country is sullied, corrupt — so morally deformed as to be beyond redemption!

Such gloom and doom mongers believe national *rigor mortis* is already setting in. The undertaker is waiting impatiently. America's funeral will, they think, soon become part of the dusty pages of history.

But before we can speculate on America's future “history,” we need to examine America's past, and we also need to understand present-day America.

Look at America today. In spite of our social, economic and moral wrinkles, how greatly have we been blessed in comparison with the other nations of this earth!

We shall now take a critical look at these United States of America from three different perspectives: 1) the goodly heritage of this rich land



of plenty, including our marvelous climate; 2) our thriving, unparalleled economy; and 3) the U.S. military dominance in the world.

### *America's Goodly Heritage*

Our national heritage, when rightly viewed, can only elicit open-mouthed astonishment, awe and wonderment.

Truly, no nation or people has ever been so fortunate as the peoples of these United States of America.

President Abraham Lincoln aptly stated this when he proclaimed a day of fasting and prayer in 1863. The President said: "We find ourselves in the peaceful possession of *the fairest portion of the earth*, as regards *fertility of soil*, extent of territory, and salubrity of *climate*. . . . We find ourselves the legal inheritors of these fundamental blessings. We toiled not in the acquirement or the establishment of them."

He continued: "We have been the recipients of the *choicest blessings of heaven*. . . . We have grown in numbers, wealth and power as no other nation ever has grown."

Lincoln was right — but in the one hundred thirteen years since his words were penned, we have been blessed even more.

In size, the United States is the fourth largest nation — after Russia, China, and Canada. We also have the fourth largest population — after China, India, and Russia.

Though we occupy only about 6 percent of the earth's land surface, we possess 18 percent of the world's croplands. Very few nations have as much "arable land" per capita as the U.S. — with 3 acres per person. Russia has only 2.8, France has 1.2, India 0.9, Norway 0.6. (Canada, our sister country, has a whopping 6.7 acres per capita.)

These United States lie between the 26° and 55° N. latitude — in the *north temperate zone*. As you go north of the U.S. border, the growing season is drastically reduced and the weather becomes harsh during much of the year. When you travel south of our border, you quickly descend into humid heat and subtropical weather.

### *World's "Breadbasket"*

As a direct result of our being so abundantly blessed with one of the world's most varied and enticing climates, and with our possession of the earth's most productive land, America has become the "breadbasket" of the world.

In 1973 the U.S. exported over \$17 billion worth of farm produce. This figure rose to about \$20 billion in 1974; and burgeoning shipments of food continued in 1975. U.S. food exports will undoubtedly continue to climb higher in coming years as America tries to stave off famine in

the world's undernourished countries, as long as her own crops remain bountiful.

Notice the proportion (of all foodstuffs exported worldwide) which the U.S. exported in 1973: 89 percent of all *soybeans*, 74 percent of *corn*, 53 percent of *wheat*, 26 percent of all *rice*, and 18 percent of all *cotton*.

The U.S. is now exporting about 60 million metric tons of grain each year. Canada exports about 14 million, Argentina and Australia about 12 million each.

The U.S. has quadrupled in size since 1790, when there were only 889,000 square miles in the nation. By 1890 we had grown to 3 million square miles.

While Canada occupies about half of North America (it has 3,851,809 square miles), the United States possesses 3,608,787 square miles, and our southern neighbor, Mexico has 761,000 square miles.

It is interesting to note that the U.S.-Canadian border is the longest unfortified frontier in the world. Nearly 4,000 miles of border separate Canada and the 48 U.S. states to her south. Add to this the 1500-mile border between Canada and the state of Alaska. Every year there are over 60 million crossings of the U.S.-Canadian border, and over 125 million crossings of the U.S.-Mexican border.

Furthermore, much of the U.S. is laced with rivers and streams, and there are many thousands of lakes, including the important Great Lakes which we share with Canada. The Mississippi-Missouri river is the fifth longest river in the world. The Indian word *Mississippi* means "Father of Waters."

The entire world would be much poorer today if America had not been discovered and colonized. Few Americans realize how many important foods are indigenous to their continent. Here are only a few of them: Corn, potatoes, peanuts, squashes, pumpkins, avocados, peppers, pineapples, tomatoes, cacao, cocoa, and many others others.

The U.S. has been blessed with expansive tracts of productive croplands, large forests, a multitude of rivers, streams and lakes, and a varied but temperate climate. This new "Promised Land" is also rich in oil and other minerals. The U.S. possesses about *one third* of all the coal in the entire world. Once the technique of extracting and utilizing this vast resource in an economical manner is perfected, America should have enough of this abundant fuel to keep her going for many centuries.

### *America at the Economic Pinnacle*

The total wealth produced by the original Thirteen Colonies at the time of the American Revolution was miniscule in comparison with today's gross national product of one and a half trillion dollars! America's GNP accounts for over one third of the total world GNP! This



mind-boggling figure represents the total value of both *goods* and *services* produced annually by the U.S. And this is nearly double the GNP of the Soviet Union.

Here are the GNP figures for some of the major non-Communist nations of the world — as computed for the calendar year of 1972: *Japan* 335 billion; *W. Germany* 286 billion; *France* 218 billion; *Great Britain* 152 billion; *Italy* 122,090; *Canada* 103 billion; *India* 58 billion; *Spain* 51 billion; *Netherlands* 51 billion; *Australia* 51 billion. Brazil's GNP for that same year was just barely below the 50 billion figure. Soviet Russia, East Germany and Communist China certainly must have had a GNP of well over 50 billion in that same year.

Other non-Communist nations' GNP fell well below 50 billion for 1972.

These figures will give you some idea of just how small the actual productive capacity (the annual GNP) of most nations really is. During that same year (1972) the U.S. GNP was nearly \$1 trillion — \$930 billion.

In August 1974, *Fortune* magazine listed the top 50 industrial corporations in the world. Of the twelve largest corporations, *ten* are American. These twelve leading corporations are (in order of size): General Motors, Exxon (during 1975 Exxon became number 1 and GM number 2) Ford, *Royal Dutch/Shell*, Chrysler, General Electric, Texaco, Mobil Oil, *Unilever*, IBM, ITT, Gulf Oil. All of these twelve top corporations are American-based except *Royal Dutch/Shell* and *Unilever*.

Another index of U.S. affluence can be seen in the *average family income* compared with other nations. In America, the average family income is now running at about \$14,200. One of the reasons for this very high average family income is the fact that 43% of all women are now employed; and there are now 3,000,000 women who earn more than their husbands.

In 1776 the annual income per person was less than \$500. A century later (1876) it had risen to \$800. Today the average annual income per person in the U.S. is running at the high mark of over \$6,000!

Another indicator of the economic strength of America today is the sheer size of our U.S. Government budget — which during the year of our Bicentennial celebration is running over \$350 billion, and is soon expected to climb above the \$400 billion mark!

The annual U.S. defense budget, if all hidden items are included, is now running well over \$100 billion — and this is more than double the entire gross national product of the vast majority of nations on this earth — as most nations' annual GNP is well below \$50 billion.

The GNP of the state of California is now running well over \$100 billion. If California were to become a separate nation, her annual GNP would be the eighth largest in the entire world.

Another sign of unprecedented U.S. prosperity is the number of motor vehicles choking our highways. The U.S. now has over 105 million *automobiles*, plus 25 million *trucks and busses* — 130 million motor vehicles clogging our roads, superhighways, and city streets. (This affluence is now regarded as a mixed blessing!)

### *A Glut of Material Things*

Never before have the peoples of any nation been so blessed (or glutted!) with material possessions! Nearly two thirds of all Americans now own their own homes — over 60 percent to be more precise — and over two million own second homes. Eighty percent own at least one car — while millions have two cars, and many own three or more.

Nearly all U.S. families own *refrigerators, TV sets, radios; and washing machines*, while over 90 percent have *telephones*.

The average American only spends about 18 percent of his consumer dollars on *food*; the average Briton spends 30 percent, and food runs to about 40 percent in the nations behind the Iron Curtain. But worse still, in the underdeveloped countries the figure runs to 60 percent.

Does an average American worker work *fewer hours* in order to purchase food, clothing, houses, cars, appliances, etc. — than the average worker in other nations? He certainly does!

The following facts taken from *The Real America* by Ben J. Wattenberg, reveal some shocking comparisons between the American and non-American workers' actual purchasing power:

### LIVING STANDARDS, INTERNATIONAL COMPARISONS, TEN SELECTED ITEMS

To buy this —	A typical factory hand must work this long in—				
	U.S.	Japan	Britain	France	W.Germany
Low-priced home	4-5 yrs.	12-14 yrs.	6-7 yrs.	8-10 yrs.	10-12 yrs.
TV set, B & W	36 hrs.	87½ hrs.	99 hrs.	125 hrs.	69 hrs.
Small car	15 wks.	21½ wks.	32½ wks.	33 wks.	21½ wks.
Man's shoes	6½ hrs.	7½ hrs.	9½ hrs.	12½ hrs.	9 hrs.
Whiskey, fifth	80 min.	5½ hrs.	3 hrs.	4 hrs.	2 hrs.
Cigarettes, pack	8 min.	7 min.	23 min.	13 min.	17 min.
Hamburger, lb.	14 min.	62 min.	30 min.	47 min.	29 min.
Eggs, dozen	11 min.	22 min.	23 min.	33 min.	21 min.
Milk, half gal.	10 min.	24 min.	15 min.	17 min.	13 min.
Bread, lb.	4 min.	14 min.	8 min.	7 min.	7 min.

In 1971, 99.8 percent of American homes had radios; 94 percent had vacuum cleaners; 84 percent had electric food mixers; 91 percent had



automatic coffeemakers; and in the four years from 1969 through 1972, 23 million power lawnmowers were sold. During this same period, 34 million tape recorders, 18 million phonographs, and 18 million hair dryers were bought in affluent America.

In 1973, Americans purchased 31 million major appliances, 8 million color TV sets, 11.5 million new autos, and were still able to contribute nearly \$24.5 billion to charity.

Interestingly, most of the leading industrial nations lay a heavier tax burden on the shoulders of their citizenry than does the U.S. Of the 13 leading industrial nations of the world, the U.S. tax burden is the second *lowest*. And four of those thirteen countries impose a tax burden on their peoples which now averages over 40 percent. (The average U.S. citizen only pays 28 *percent* of his income in *taxes* — federal, state, local.)

Though inflation continues to pick the pockets of Americans, to their everlasting annoyance, it has been much lower in the U.S. than in most of the industrial nations during the last ten years. In the U.S. it has averaged less than ten percent per annum during that ten-year period. But in many other countries it has run up to twenty percent or higher.

Inflation was roaring along at about 25 percent in Britain (but is now down to around *only* 12 percent), and is racing along at the fantastic rate of 75 percent in Argentina!

Meanwhile the U.S. continues to give away much to other nations. Since World War II, the U.S. has given away about \$69 billion in military aid, and about \$110 billion in civilian aid. Besides this, we have exported to the other industrial nations billions in American capital investment and have given or sold to them countless billions worth of advanced technology.

America's friends and foes alike around the world continue to criticize, all the while aping and envying her — realizing that they are just not able to compete with this industrial and military colossus.

In 1957, Premier Khrushchev boasted Russia would soon overtake the U.S. in her annual GNP. He worked hard to convert Russia from a "goulash economy" to a modern technologically advanced, computer-run nation. But this modernization process has been slow.

Since that time, droves of Russian agricultural experts have constantly toured American farms and factories to see what it is that enables the U.S. to far outproduce Russia in so many vital areas — even though Russia is about two and one-half times the size of America.

In 1900, 38 percent of the American labor force was employed on farms — as laborers, foremen or farm managers. By 1970 only 4.3 *percent of the American work force was left employed on farms!*

But...27% of Soviet Russia's work force is now employed in



the running of Soviet farms; in *Japan* it's 24%; while France employs 18%; and 11% in West Germany.

In spite of many social and labor evils which still plague America, the average U.S. wage continues to rise, and the after-taxes purchasing power of the average American continues to climb steadily upward — giving America the world's highest standard of living.

### *Has America Been Too Blessed?*

Many Americans simply don't realize just how gratly blessed they have been. Having made several world tours, and having travelled widely throughout Europe (where I lived for fifteen years), it is my conclusion that even the "poor" of the U.S. are much better off than are the masses of most countries.

Ordinary items of food, clothing, shelter and appliances — articles which are commonplace in America — things which we take for granted — are luxury items in most nations. We have been so blessed with fine homes, beautiful autos, nice clothes, innumerable appliances, varied and exotic foods — that we tend to take all these blessings for granted. And all too often we seem to feel or express no real thanks or gratitude for our superabundance!

The late Prime Minister of Japan, Kakuei Tanaka, seemed to sense our national ingratitude when he commented: "I often wonder why you (Americans) worry so much about domestic problems when you have such an abundance of resources. For example, look at American agricultural productivity. It's easy for the U.S. to expand its output whenever it chooses. We can't do that in Japan. When I compare the situation here in Japan with the situation in your country, I think that as a nation you are too privileged."

When he was asked if he really believed we were "too privileged," he replied: "Yes, *I think God has not been very fair in the distribution of resources.*"

He further commented: "The U.S. has many domestic problems, and some Americans may be deeply concerned about the way their country is being run. But of all the 3.7 billion people on this earth, Americans have the most stable economy, they have an abundance of resources available within their own country, and they have more investments abroad than any other country. So in terms of broad economic activity, the influence of the United States, as such, has not changed at all.

"When you think in terms of a capability in exercising economic, political and military power, the weight of the U.S. in world affairs has not declined at all. I expect it to continue to be as important as it has been in the past" (*U.S. News & World Report*, Nov. 26, 1973).

Was the late Prime Minister of Japan right in thinking that the U.S. is "too privileged" by having "such an abundance of resources"? Was he really right in saying: "I think God has not been very fair in the distribution of resources"?

It is certain that America has been blessed by Heaven with the "fattest land" in the whole earth — if one considers, as originally stated, the fertility of our soil, the abundance of our natural resources and the temperate climate with which we have been favored.

But how did it all come about?

*Have* all these great blessings come to us as a result of our own cleverness, brilliance, ingenuity?

Is it merely by "chance" that we have received them? Were our forefathers especially gifted above other men, or more lucky?

Or was this bounty fore-ordained by Providence?

Before we can truly understand the answers to these questions, we must survey the historical setting which led to the establishment of the original Thirteen Colonies along our eastern seaboard.

What world conditions led up to the colonization of the New World by Europeans? How did the British come to win the struggle for control of the North American continent?

