

COMPREHENSIVE  
**DIALOGUE**

Mai 2022 Edition

**Defending Light and Liberty:**  
**Conversation across the Centuries**

between

**Michael Gorbachev**

and **Thomas Jefferson**





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## Introduction



Since time immemorial human beings have been searching for light and truth, the right way to live and to find happiness. The great teachings of world religions, great epics and tales, often retold from generation to generation, have helped to offer direction and guidance to humanity and to mould our common destiny. This search and development has been accompanied by an ongoing fight between darkness and light. Much of the world's “outer” history before the age of enlightenment in the 17th Century, and even afterwards, has been dictated and decided by wars.

Thomas Jefferson and the founding fathers of the United States, heralded a new epoch in humanity's development. The Declaration of Independence laid the groundwork for a movement towards liberty, freedom and democratic self-government. The ideals of U.S. society are framed by the principles stated in the Constitution, and based on the even-handed execution of the rule of law. Many other countries have adopted a democratic form of government since 1776.

With the passage of time, the world has grown together and become more interdependent, like one big organism, or global family. Much progress has been made in a number of fields, but many huge, old problems remain and glaring new ones have appeared. Some of the most important of the current challenges are of an international, global nature and can only be tackled by countries working together.

Unfortunately, it seems that the (uncontrolled) advancement of knowledge and technology in many fields has outstripped the moral and ethical advancement of human societies. President Mikhail Gorbachev realized this more than 30 years ago and exclaimed, “we need a revolution of consciousness.” He added, “the roots of the crisis are in man himself, in his consciousness and his demands, in his mentality and philosophy.”

Gorbachev, like Jefferson, is an epochal, colossal world figure who showed the world a better way to go. His “new political thinking” put global needs above national interests. He

managed, almost single-handedly, to steer the world away from militarization, from “might is right,” towards trust, cooperation, mutual understanding, and a sense of responsibility towards the well-being of the entire earth-planet. During his six short years in political power, he embodied the personality, the strength and the political will to actually get things done; in these years extraordinary changes took place in his country and in the whole world.

Mikhail Gorbachev had been “in conversation” with Thomas Jefferson since his student years, and his leadership was greatly encouraged and inspired by the third President of the United States. Once one examines it closely, it is easy to see Jefferson's influence on Gorbachev's political views and actions.

Currently, freedom, the rights of self-determination and democratic governance are again under attack in different parts of the world. The terrible nature of war is tragically displayed for all to see. Countless lives and infinite resources have been lost. Alas, the world has still not grown to a level of maturity where conflicts can be addressed and solved in a humane way. Alas, too often we do not see a level of political will and sense of responsibility towards our earth planet sufficient to overcome the imminent threats and overwhelming problems of today's world.

The beliefs and actions of both Thomas Jefferson and Mikhail Gorbachev can be exemplars and trailblazers of a better way. Their declarations of self-determination, peace, trust, and cooperation are incomparable as guideposts for a world which advances towards the goals of individual and collective positive development. The sooner we can follow in their footsteps and live up to their vision and ideals, the better for each and every one of us, and for all the world as a whole.

This magazine explores the essentials of the life and work of Thomas Jefferson and Mikhail Gorbachev. I hope you find it valuable as you set forth on your journey!

*Michael S. Karlen, Editor*

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# Thomas Jefferson – Essentials

*“All honor to Jefferson — to the man who, in the concrete pressure of a struggle for national independence by a single people, had the coolness, forecast, and capacity to introduce into a merely revolutionary document, an abstract truth, applicable to all men and all times, and so to embalm it there, that today, and in all coming days, it shall be a rebuke and a stumbling-block to the very harbingers of re-appearing tyranny and oppression.”*

Abraham Lincoln, President of the United States (1861–1865)

## Introduction

Thomas Jefferson was the author of the Declaration of Independence of the United States of America, the Statute of Virginia for Religious Freedom and founder of the University of Virginia. Born on April 13th 1743 and living long enough to breathe the early morning air of July 4th 1826, the 50th anniversary of the Declaration, Jefferson was, among other occupations, a farmer, gardener, architect, scientist, lawyer and musician. As a civil servant, he was a legislator and chief executive of Virginia, minister plenipotentiary to France, secretary of state and president of the USA, educator and university rector. Much of Jefferson’s view on service involved trusting the individual and his society and guaranteeing the inborn rights to happiness and self-government. His advocacy for freedom of thought, religion and expression and his genuine love and concern for fellow human beings have been models wherefrom generations of peoples and nations born and unborn have since drawn. P. Cordeiro da Silva

## The Declaration of Independence

Our fellow citizens have a sacred attachment to the event of which the paper of July 4th, 1776, was but the Declaration, the genuine effusion of the soul of our country at that time.

Jefferson’s “original Rough draught” of the Declaration of Independence, 11 June–4 July 1776

We hold these truths to be sacred & undeniable; that all men are created equal & independent, that from that equal creation they derive rights inherent & inalienable, among which are the preservation of life, & liberty, & the pursuit of happiness; that to secure these ends, governments are instituted among men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed;... laying it’s foundation on such principles & organising it’s powers in such form, as to them shall seem most likely to effect their safety & happiness.... all experience hath shewn that mankind are more disposed

Monticello is the autobiographical masterpiece of Thomas Jefferson.

to suffer while evils are sufferable, than to right themselves by abolishing the forms to which they are accustomed. but when a long train of abuses & usurpations, begun at a distinguished period, & pursuing invariably the same object, evinces a design to subject them to arbitrary power, it is their right, it is their duty, to throw off such government & to provide new guards for their future security.... let facts be submitted to a candid world, for the truth of which we pledge a faith yet unsullied by falsehood.

Jefferson’s “original Rough draught” of the Declaration of Independence, 11 June–4 July 1776

## “Hallowed ark of human hope and happiness”

All mankind ought then, with us, to rejoice in its prosperous, and sympathize in its adverse fortunes, as involving everything dear to man. And to what sacrifices of interest, or convenience, ought not these considerations to animate us? To what compromises of opinion and inclination, to maintain harmony and union among ourselves, and to preserve from all danger this hallowed ark of human hope and happiness.

Thomas Jefferson to the Citizens of Washington, D.C., 4 March 1809

## Self-Government and Democracy

I consider the people who constitute a society or nation as the source of all authority in that nation, as free to transact their common

concerns by any agents they think proper, to change these agents individually, or the organisation of them in form or function whenever they please;

Thomas Jefferson to George Washington, Opinion on the Treaties with France, 28 April 1793

## Change to self-government

It is indeed an animating thought, that while we are securing the rights of ourselves and our posterity, we are pointing out the way to struggling nations, who wish like us to emerge from their tyrannies also. Heaven help their struggles, and lead them, as it has done us, triumphantly through them. I join with you in the hope and belief that they will see, from our example, that a free government is of all others the most energetic ; that the inquiry which has been excited among the mass of mankind by our revolution and its consequences, will ameliorate the condition of man over a great portion of the globe.

Thomas Jefferson to William Hunter, Mayor of Alexandria. Response to the Address of Welcome, 11 March 1790

## The Fourth of July

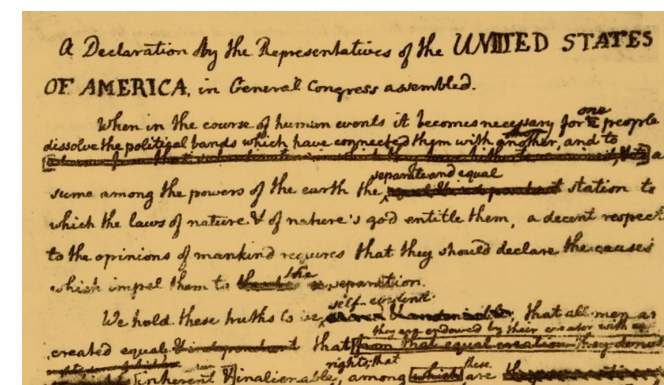
The flames kindled on the 4th of July, 1776, have spread over too much of the globe to be extinguished by the feeble engines of despotism ; on the contrary, they will consume these engines and all who work them.

To John Adams from Thomas Jefferson, 12 September 1821

## Freedom and Rights

A bill of rights is what the people are entitled to against every government on earth, general or particular ; and what no just government should refuse, or rest on inference. The Constitution should provide clearly, and without the aid of sophism, for freedom of religion, freedom of the press, protection against standing armies, restriction of monopolies, the eternal and unremitting force of the habeas corpus laws, and trials by jury in all matters of fact triable by the laws of land, and not by the laws of nations.

Thomas Jefferson to James Madison, 20 December 1787



*“We hold these truths to be sacred and undeniable; that all men are created equal and independant, that from that equal creation they derive rights inherent and inalienable, among which are the preservation of life, and liberty, and the pursuit of happiness;”*

Jefferson’s “original Rough draught” of the Declaration of Independence, 11 June – 4 July 1776



*“Thomas Jefferson was the foremost voice of the great patriots of the American Revolution, the leader most trusted to articulate the nation’s highest ideals, particularly in times of trial and transition. His Declaration of American Independence, Virginia Statute for Religious Freedom and First Inaugural address can confidently be placed among the world’s most powerful and admired inspirational essays. Under Jefferson’s steady hand, the hopeful promise of the Revolution was consolidated into the permanent reality of a continental republic based on Enlightenment principles.”*

**Eric S. Petersen**, Editor of “Light and Liberty – Reflections on the pursuit of happiness” by Thomas Jefferson

The Constitution should provide clearly, and without the aid of sophism, for freedom of religion, freedom of the press, protection against standing armies, restriction of monopolies, the eternal and unremitting force of the habeas corpus laws, and trials by jury in all matters of fact triable by the laws of land, and not by the laws of nations.

Thomas Jefferson to James Madison, 20 December 1787

**Freedom of religion**

... no man shall be compelled to frequent or support any religious worship, place, or ministry whatsoever... all men shall be free to profess, and by argument to maintain, their opinions in matters of religion, and that the same shall in no wise diminish, enlarge, or affect their civil capacities.

Thomas Jefferson, A Bill for Establishing Religious Freedom, 18 June 1779

*The University of Virginia was founded in 1819 by Thomas Jefferson.*



I have ever thought religion a concern purely between our God and our consciences, for which we were accountable to Him, and not to the priests.

Thomas Jefferson to Margaret Bayard Smith, 6 August 1816

To love God with all thy heart and thy neighbor as thyself, is the sum of religion.

Thomas Jefferson to Benjamin Waterhouse, 26 June 1822

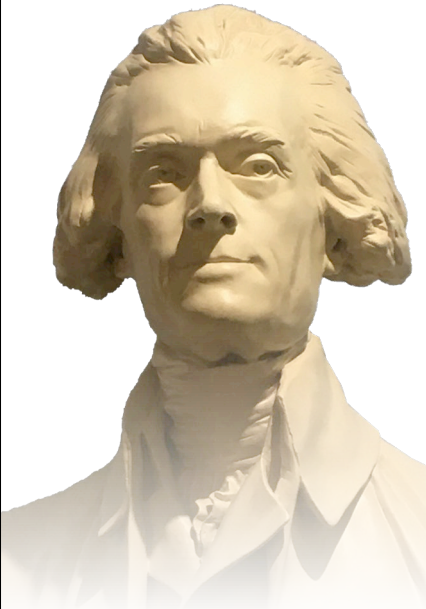
Education

Man, once surrendering his reason, has no remaining guard against absurdities the most monstrous, and like a ship without rudder, is the sport of every wind. With such persons, gullibility, which they call faith, takes the helm from the hand of reason, and the mind becomes a wreck.

Thomas Jefferson to James Smith, 8 December 1822

In every government on earth is some trace of human weakness, some germ of corruption and degeneracy, which cunning will discover and wickedness insensibly open, cultivate, and improve. Every government degenerates when trusted to the rulers of the people alone. The people themselves, therefore, are its only safe depositaries. And to render even them safe, their minds must be improved to a certain degree.

Thomas Jefferson, Notes on the State of Virginia, 1782



And say, finally, whether peace is best preserved by giving energy to the government, or information to people. This last is the most certain, and the most legitimate engine of government. Educate and inform the whole mass of the people. Enable them to see that it is their interest to preserve peace and order, and they will preserve them. And it requires no very high degree of education to convince them of this. They are the only sure reliance for the preservation of our liberty.

Thomas Jefferson to Uriah Forrest, 31 December 1787

**University of Virginia**

The University will give employment to my remaining years ... it is the last act of usefulness I can render, and could I see it open I would not ask an hour more of life. To you I hope many will still be given; and, certain they will all be employed for the good of our beloved country.

Thomas Jefferson to Spencer Roane, 9 March 1821

The Relevance of Thomas Jefferson

The America that Jefferson was born into was a mostly agricultural society of some two million British subjects and half a million slaves. Even though far from England and with no representation in the Court, they were taxed, forced to conform to the state religion, had their governors appointed, their own legislature overridden by the Parliament, and treated as vassal people, not as fellow citizens, nor a nation unto itself. With time, the advancement of the concept of self-government together with the patriots of America rallied, and eventually the Declaration of Independence of 1776 was drafted by Jefferson, symbolizing the aspirations of the people and holding keys to the future development of mankind. The sacred fire of the United States of America was referred to by Jefferson as “the American experiment.” It was a path trod then for the first time, and was a mode for all future self-governing societies.

The man who wrote his own epitaph had asked it to state: “Here was buried Thomas Jefferson, author of the Declaration of American Independence, of the Statute of Virginia for Religious Freedom and Father of the University of Virginia.” These give insight into what was probably most important for him: self-government, freedom of conscience and education, plus as we know from the Declaration of Independence, “the pursuit of happiness.”

The Sage of Monticello, with his vision and clear-sightedness, stood out among the luminaries of his time; for many he remains one of history’s foremost world citizens. As a proof of this, his America became not just one nation called the United States, but an America full of the sacred fire of liberty, a beacon signaling the importance of self-government and freedom to all nations. P. Cordeiro da Silva

**The Pursuit of Happiness**

If the wise be the happy man, as the sages say, he must be virtuous too; for, without virtue, happiness cannot be.

Thomas Jefferson to Amos J. Cook, 21 January 1816

Our greatest happiness does not depend on the condition of life in which chance has placed us, but is always the result of a good conscience, good health, occupation, and freedom in all just pursuits.

Thomas Jefferson, Notes on the State of Virginia, 1782

Interesting occupations are essential to happiness. Indeed, the whole art of being happy consists in the art of finding employment. A mind always employed is always happy. This is the true secret, the grand recipe, for felicity.

Thomas Jefferson to Martha Jefferson Randolph, 26 April 1790







# Mikhail Gorbachev – Essentials

Texts selected from the book "Essential Thoughts", Mikhail Gorbachev, edited by M.S. Karlen, 2019

### Introduction

Even today, thirty years after he stepped down voluntarily as the President of the Soviet Union, Gorbachev’s voice is sought, heard and treasured – including by a growing number of people in Russia. This is most essential in today’s time and situation and may offer vision, direction, inspiration and encouragement. We should never forget the times when Gorbachev was in power, what new hope and promise was developing in international relations. What extraordinary achievements were made in a very short time. This example is proof that it is possible - and it is the only fruitful way forward. Mikhail Gorbachev says that “The twenty-first century will be a century either of total all-embracing crisis or of moral and spiritual healing that will reinvigorate humankind.” It is our choice, it is in our hands. Each and everyone can contribute. Through prayer, through solidarity, through concrete action.

### Let us remember

Gorbachev cultivated and offered freedom, both in spirit and in action. One may recall the newly gained freedom of speech, the freedom to publish, the freedom to travel, the freedom of artistic and intellectual expression in the former Soviet Union that came with him in the late 1980’s.

The freedom of choice he offered to the former Soviet Republics to determine their own future for their countries. The freedom of choice he offered for the two Germanys to reunite. Former Prime Minister of Great Britain Margaret Thatcher gave Gorbachev ninety percent of the credit for ending the Cold War. In very few years he managed to completely change the relationship with the US and bring a completely new spirit and light into international politics.



When Gorbachev came to power, the prospect of a nuclear holocaust threatened all mankind. During his presidency, eighty percent of US and Russian nuclear weapons were destroyed. This was an unprecedented step towards peace and security in human history. Together with US Presidents Ronald Reagan and George H.W. Bush Sr., several major disarmament

treaties were signed. For his leading role in the peace process, Mikhail Gorbachev received the Nobel Peace Prize in 1990. Mikhail Gorbachev’s vision and force of spirit have proven extraordinary by all standards. His new political thinking or Perestroika has been not only applicable in his native country but is an essential approach to mutual understanding, development and peace on a global level. Cooperation and mutual trust are indispensable in international affairs if we are to tackle the many global challenges we face. During the time of 1985–1991, Gorbachev proved this to be possible and gave a shining example. Gorbachev’s openness, sincerity and authenticity, as well as his genuine willingness to create trust, cooperation and mutual understanding, were felt the world over. President Gorbachev became a hero in his lifetime for millions all over the world. Gorbachev will not be forgotten, because his message and values are universal.

## Essential Thoughts by Mikhail Gorbachev

### Perestroika and the New Thinking

Perestroika was not a choice for me: it was a direct extension of my personality, my philosophy, and my moral feelings. For me, the important thing is the central idea of shifting from a sense of belonging to a nation to a sense of belonging to the human race.

### Global governance

Whether we like each other or not, we will have to live on this planet together. Hence our most important task ... is to master the art of getting along together. And since this situation will be around for quite a while, we have to learn to live side by side in a civilized manner. Our political leaders need new overall guidelines. It is the bringing together of politics, science, religion, and morality that will provide the key to solving the problems that humankind is facing today. And it is the personal involvement of each and every individual that will allow a new civilization to flourish on Earth.

*“My most urgent message is that it is time for every person and every nation to rethink their role in global development. Everyone needs to be involved. Everyone has a role to play. And it is the personal involvement of each and every individual that will allow a new civilization to flourish on Earth.”*

Mikhail Gorbachev

*“Imagine that an alien spaceship approached Earth and sent the message: ‘Take me to your leader.’ Who would that be? Without doubt, Mikhail Sergeyevich Gorbachev.”*

New York Times editorial, May 21, 1989

I want to stand up for the very notion of trust in international relations. This is not something ephemeral, not just ‘good intentions’. This is what happens when parties respect each other and take into account each other’s interests.

### Disarmament

It is my firm belief that the infinite and uncontrollable fury of nuclear weapons should never be held in the hands of any mere mortal ever again, for any reason. The only way towards genuine peace is to eliminate these weapons altogether. To embark on this path means to pass a historic maturity test.

### Environment

I believe that the environmental challenge is the number one problem on the [international] agenda. If we don’t succeed, then no theory, no system will matter, all the current disagreements will seem like peanuts compared to the destructive impact of the conflict between man and his environment. We need a new global consciousness, an environmentalization of consciousness. We are all passengers aboard one ship, the Earth, and we must not allow it to be wrecked. There will be no second Noah’s Ark.

### Freedom, Liberty and the Pursuit of Happiness

The ultimate solutions lie in the very basic elements of human existence, the deep-running processes that determine the life of the human community. It is the individual, in all his creative diversity, who is the main character in history. Therefore, the initial task of perestroika and the key to its



success was to awaken the individual, to make him truly active and involved, to ensure that everyone felt himself the master of his country, his enterprise or office, his institution.

Texts selected from the book "Essential Thoughts", Mikhail Gorbachev, edited by M.S. Karlen, 2019

**In retrospect, Gorbachev's drift is obvious in statements he made early on.**

*"We must live and let live," he told Time magazine in August 1985. "Any thought at all about starting a nuclear war is madness," he informed visiting U.S. senators in early September. To French parliamentarians he damned "the infernal train of the arms race." Not just "national interests, but world interests" must guide humanity, he informed Nobel laureates in November. At a press conference following the U.S.– Soviet summit in Geneva that same month: "The interconnections and interdependence of nations demand new policies." From a New Year's address to the Soviet people: "In the nuclear age, all the peoples of the earth are in one boat." In an interview with the French Communist newspaper, L'Humanite, on February 4, 1986: "It won't even take unprecedented stupidity or criminality for civilization to destroy itself. All it would take is to continue acting as mankind has acted for thousands of years — to keep relying on arms and force to settle international disputes. It is this tradition that we must ruthlessly demolish."*

**William Taubmann** – Gorbachev: His Life and Times

**Message by Mikhail Gorbachev**

For me personally, a world without war became my most important dream long before I took up the highest positions in the state. After all, as a child, I had experienced the most brutal war in the history of mankind. I saw the terrible destruction of cities and villages in Russia. The aspiration for peace became a part of my nature. For me, peace means a transition from simple co existence, to cooperation and common creativity among countries and peoples, to a dialogue of civilizations. A quarter of a century ago, thanks to the gradual development of mutual trust, we succeeded in putting an end to the Cold War, stopping the division of Europe into hostile parts and fulfilling the dream of the post-war Germans for the reunification of their country. At that time Germans took to the streets declaring their wish by chanting, "We are one country! We are one nation!" Today I propose a new motto:

***"We are one Mankind, we are one Planet!  
We must live in peace!  
This goal is real and achievable."***

Excerpts from a Message to the Sri Chinmoy Oneness-Home Peace Run, 2017



**The Relevance of Mikhail Gorbachev**

**A New Vision for World Politics**

Gorbachev's desire for diplomatic interaction based on "mutual understanding," "mutually advantageous cooperation" and "trust" suggests a radical departure from the conventional "realist" view of a world arena composed of self-interested nation states waging a "zero-sum" competition in an environment of constant threats and inevitable clashes of interests.

At the level of the global system, stressing familiar themes embodied in the Soviet "new thinking," Gorbachev calls for an international community organized on the basis of equal respect among powers great and small, strengthening the UN and developing a world system that would function in accordance with universally accepted standards of governance.

Gorbachev's optimism with regard to human potential contrasts sharply with the purported fallibility of humanity resounding throughout classical and modern scholarly writings concerning world politics. While the "realist" tradition in international relations and strategic discourse holds little if any hope for altering human nature, Gorbachev claims that no less than a "revolution in human consciousness" is needed for elevating interaction on the world stage. Western observers might be surprised by the reference offered by the former General Secretary of the CPSU to human beings as "God's highest creation" possessing the capacity to bring about a "humane future." He states: "We must advance through worldwide cooperation based on complete equality, without any use of force, and with peaceful co-development of all nations."

Gorbachev must be analyzed and interpreted not only in terms of his thinking concerning world politics, but most important in the transmission of his philosophical and moral values to the sphere of policy. While several observers have offered sharp criticism of Gorbachev's leadership, there is no denying that his foreign policy orientation was manifested in dramatic and con-

crete policy actions ultimately resulting in the achievement of unprecedented arms reductions, negotiated resolution of regional conflicts and a shift in the world community from a condition of adversarial confrontation to creating the circumstances for a constructive partnership[...]"

Sharyl Cross, Prof. of Political Science San Jose University (California, USA)  
Igor Zevelev, Prof. and Head Research Associate of the Russian Academy of Sciences

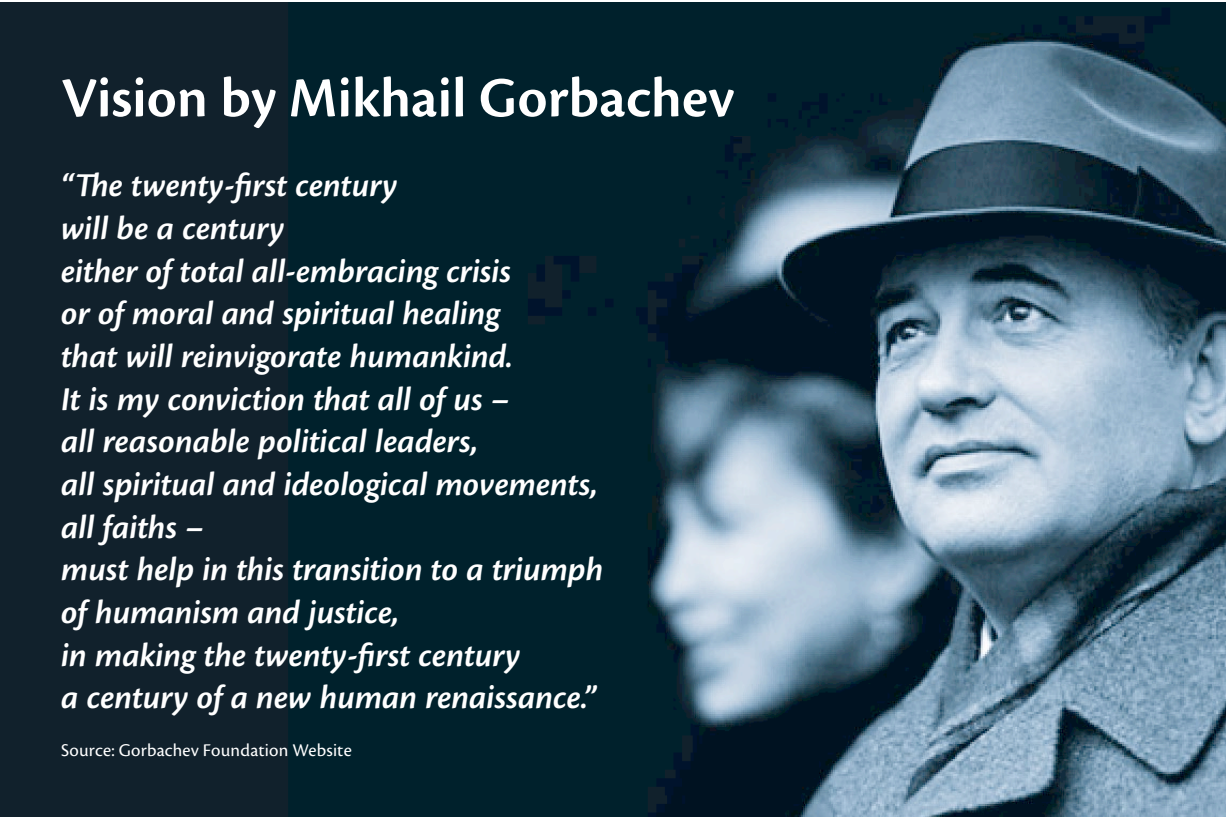
**The Gorbachev Factor**

In his December 1988 UN speech, Gorbachev noted that a "one-sided emphasis on military strength" ultimately "weakens other components of national security." He said that "freedom of choice" was "a universal principle" from which there must be no exceptions.

Few heads of government in the 1980s paid as much attention to the natural environment and to "green" issues as did Gorbachev. In his UN speech, Gorbachev emphasized "the worldwide ecological threats" that in many regions had become "simply frightening" and called for a center for ecological assistance to be set up under the auspices of the United Nations. He spoke of the need to seek "an all-human consensus on movement towards a new world order," but said progress must not come at "the expense of the rights and freedoms of the individual or of nations or at the expense of the natural world."

Gorbachev embraced a whole range of freedoms that were anathema to the old guard. He used the authority of the office of General Secretary — which was immense until his own systemic change of the political system substantially reduced it by 1990–91 — to approve the rapid development of glasnost into freedom of speech, with freedom of publication following closely behind. He supported freedom of religion and freedom of communication across frontiers. Crucially, he embraced free intellectual inquiry and political debate.

Archie Brown, Political Scientist, Writer, Prof. Emeritus of Politics at the University of Oxford



**Vision by Mikhail Gorbachev**

***"The twenty-first century  
will be a century  
either of total all-embracing crisis  
or of moral and spiritual healing  
that will reinvigorate humankind.  
It is my conviction that all of us –  
all reasonable political leaders,  
all spiritual and ideological movements,  
all faiths –  
must help in this transition to a triumph  
of humanism and justice,  
in making the twenty-first century  
a century of a new human renaissance."***

Source: Gorbachev Foundation Website



# My Dialogue with Thomas Jefferson

Mikhail Gorbachev

## “My” Jefferson

From a private, formerly unpublished draft, Moscow, 8 April 1993

Printed with the permission of the Gorbachev Foundation



### Editor's Note

*I believe these texts will be an uplifting revelation for many. They clearly show the influence that Thomas Jefferson had on the life and political vision and work of the last President of the Soviet Union. They also show how closely Mikhail Gorbachev was familiar with the life and work of the third President of the United States of America.*

*One could also argue that they are proof that the progress of humanity always finds a way to manifest itself and advance its cause. Some repetition of thoughts can be found between the first statement “My Jefferson” which was a private draft by President Gorbachev and the official statement that followed at the University of Virginia on April 13, 1993. For authenticity and originality both statements are reproduced in their original form.*

In this second part of my presentation I wanted to talk about my “personal” relationship with Jefferson.

By way of illustration, I will give seven examples of my “acquaintance” with Jefferson and his influence on my way of thinking, which then developed into “new thinking” as the basis of politics.

My first “meeting” with Jefferson took place when I was a student at Moscow University. The basis of the Soviet theory of state and law, which I studied, was, as you might guess, a class approach. But inquisitive students turned to primary sources, read books on the history of political movements and were even required to know the contents of documents such as the “Declaration of Independence” and familiarised themselves with the basic ideas of the American Revolution.

So, first case in point: in 1785, Jefferson pushed for the abolition of the entailment. To a suggestion that the eldest son should inherit at least twice as much as the others, Jefferson replied, “Only if he works twice as hard and eats twice as much”.

This translation into positive form of one of our main ideological slogans, “He who does not work does not eat”, interested me vividly. Continuing my studies, I noticed how Jefferson transformed Locke’s famous formula – “the right to life, liberty and property”. He replaced the last word with “the right to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness”. And this at a time when the pursuit of profit was literally taking over the young nation, becoming its idea of the fix. At the same time, Jefferson, of course, attached great importance to the right to property as a condition of life and work.

The criterion of happiness as one of the foundations of human existence has planted another serious doubt in the absolute correctness of the socialist doctrine, which I was taught. Thomas Jefferson has interested me firmly ever since.

One recommendation I read from Jefferson helped me some time later to emerge from an

unpleasant state of mind. Jurisprudence in the Soviet Union was associated mainly with punitive bodies. And so it was in fact. And this is how it was perceived by the population. The court was almost identified in the common mind with a prison, or even worse. My relatives – both my grandfathers – experienced this. You must admit, it was not very pleasant, graduating from law school, to be immersed in an unjust law, in legalized injustice, to feel that you, the future judge, prosecutor or investigator, were involved in it too.

But here I read in Jefferson: “I was nurtured by the law and it gave me an insight into the dark side of humanity. Then I read poetry to smooth out that impression and familiarise myself with the brighter side.” I took that advice. It continued to help me later on. I really got into poetry and know a lot of it by heart. Of broader importance to me in my younger years was Jefferson’s confession, made during his early, Virginian period: “I swore before the altar,” he declared, “in my eternal hostility to any form of tyranny over the human spirit”. The third “encounter” with this personality is even more significant. I do not know what Jefferson was thinking as he prepared to travel to attend the Second Continental Congress, but the results are well known: he sat down and wrote his famous “Instructions”. In 1985, on the night before the March Plenum of the Central Committee, which was to confirm me as General Secretary of the CPSU Central Committee, de facto head of state, I was gripped by conflicting feelings. I was awake, circling the garden paths, and, when I decided to take over the country in its critical state, I gave myself the ‘instruction’ to put it on the path of profound reforms. Some succeeded, some did not. But I will talk about this in my memoirs.

A fourth overlap of approaches. Jefferson, as we know, did not like the draft Constitution that Madison sent him in Paris. In his view, such a document was not worth the paper it was written on, since it did not guarantee civil liberties. And he strongly supported amendments to the constitution that, as a product of collective creativity involving the states, took shape in the famous Bill of Rights.

Jefferson placed the establishment of religious liberty in Virginia among his merits next to the Declaration of Independence. This is inscribed on his tombstone. He regarded freedom of the press as “a fundamental guarantee of free government” (letter to Lafayette).

Of all the law-making achievements during

### A revelation

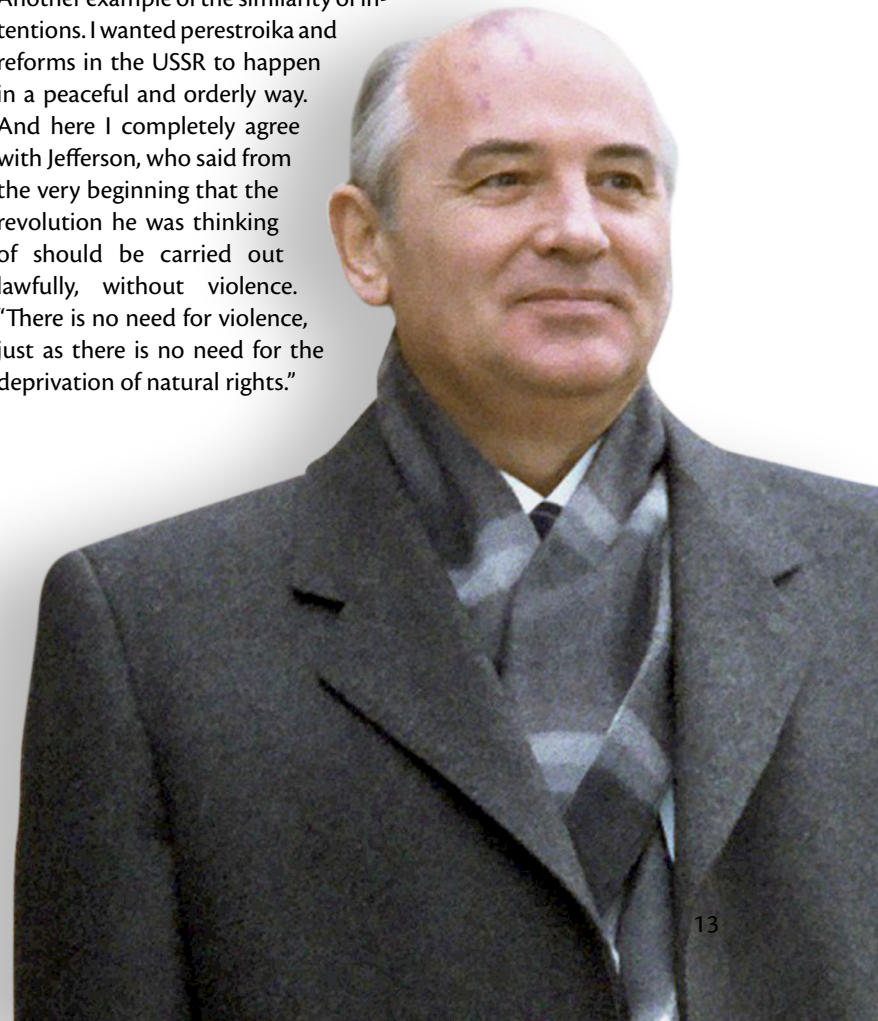
*I will start by confessing something I have never said before. At one time, such a revelation would have seemed like unheard-of heresy in our country, all the more so from the lips of a man who was General Secretary of the CPSU Central Committee.*

*The fact is that, humanly speaking, Thomas Jefferson ended up being closer to me than Marx and Lenin, whom I considered my spiritual teachers.*

*Perhaps this is the result of a deep and painful rethinking of my past and that of my country. But it is... And it is precisely because Jefferson and the sources that nourished his politics and philosophy better, more fully, more correctly reflected the universal values with which I have associated the ideas of perestroika.*

perestroika, I also appreciated the law on freedom of the press and the law on freedom of conscience. A Declaration of Citizen’s Rights was also drafted. It was to be the first part of the new constitution of the Union. The second part was to be the Treaty of Union. The third was the law on the organs of power. Unfortunately, the coup d’etat in August 1991 and the subsequent decision of the leaders of three of 12 republics to dissolve the USSR in the forest of Belovezhskaya Pushcha near Minsk, disrupted the implementation of those ideas and projects.

Another example of the similarity of intentions. I wanted perestroika and reforms in the USSR to happen in a peaceful and orderly way. And here I completely agree with Jefferson, who said from the very beginning that the revolution he was thinking of should be carried out lawfully, without violence. “There is no need for violence, just as there is no need for the deprivation of natural rights.”





***“The problem of a strong hand in Russia and in the Soviet Union has always been both painful and simultaneously appealing.***

***‘I take no pleasure in the exercise of power,’ Jefferson once said, probably lying a little. I must tell you that if I had wanted to retain for myself the unlimited power of the General Secretary, all the possibilities were there. It would have been enough for my lifetime. But I also wanted freedom for everyone and for all the peoples of my country, which means the ‘strong hand’ had to be loosened.”***

The problem of the relationship between force and law is one of the central issues in politics. Jefferson of Paris wrote that there should be a strong government for foreign relations, but not in other areas; in general, “a very strong government is no friend of mine”. Why not? The answer is in another of his statements that the weak “Articles of Confederation” were “a remarkably perfect document”.

I understand him well. He feared that a strong government could damage the freedom of citizens and rights, the necessary autonomy of the states.

The problem of a strong hand in Russia and in the Soviet Union has always been both painful and simultaneously appealing. “I take no pleasure in the exercise of power,” Jefferson once said, probably lying a little. I must tell you that if I had wanted to retain for myself the unlimited power of the General

Secretary, all the possibilities were there. It would have been enough for my lifetime. But I also wanted freedom for everyone and for all the peoples of my country, which means the “strong hand” had to be loosened.

In America in Jefferson’s time there was Hamilton, who stood for a strong federal government (I even quoted him once in Novo-Ogarevo, when we were working on the draft Union Treaty). But, being close in spirit to Jefferson, I could not simultaneously play the role of Hamilton, his political opponent. That role was then assumed by Gaidar, under the guise of Yeltsin. And it ended about the same for you and for us, though with a gap of 200 years. I also remembered Jefferson when I took over the presidency of the USSR. In his first presidential speech, he said that political intolerance was bad for society. He suggested that all citizens should come together for the unity of

a common country. He wanted to make the representative form of government effective and to give room for national development. He said that the most important task of the government was to maintain order, but that “otherwise it would leave the people free to decide for themselves how they want to work and not deprive them of their earned piece of bread”.

In essence, these were my thoughts and my intentions.

I too, like Jefferson, had to go for something I am not inclined to do in principle – an expansive interpretation of the Constitution. Jefferson bought out Louisiana, even though no article of the Constitution allowed for any such thing. I prepared for the signing of the Treaty of Union, which in some significant respects was not the same as our old Constitution. Nevertheless, I join Jefferson in saying, “I believe there is no man in the United States (for me, in the Soviet Union) who approved all the clauses of the Constitution, but there is no man who approved more clauses than I did”.

I understand the sigh of relief with which Jefferson, after eight years at the pinnacle of power and 40 years of political activity, retreated: “I am immensely happy to be removed from all this turmoil. So am I. But the ongoing crisis in Russia, in the states that emerged from the collapse of the Union, cannot let go of me”.

One last thing. There was a time when the state legislature blamed Jefferson for all the troubles and turmoil. He took it hard. But the caucus eventually decided, “To acknowledge the invalidity of future and past undeserved accusations.” So one of the founding fathers of American democracy was lucky – not only in the outside world, but also in his own country. On this, let me finish the word about the great American, whose biography is so significant and so instructive not only for his compatriots.



## Visit to the University of Virginia

**On The Occasion Of The 250<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Of The Birthday Of Thomas Jefferson Delivered On The Lawn Of The University Of Virginia**  
By Mikhail Sergeyevich Gorbachev, April 13, 1993

*Ladies and gentlemen*

I accepted with gratitude the invitation to speak about Thomas Jefferson on the occasion of his 250th anniversary celebration.

Today, as yesterday, the man born here two and a half centuries ago is still a magnet capable of attracting the hearts and minds of the new generations.

He did not freeze immobile, like an ancient mummy or a monument to himself. He is moving in the flow of time, showing new facets and revealing the hidden aspects of his personality. Having lived a long and complicated life, Jefferson remains amazingly young. His hour of triumph, when divine inspiration guided the pen of the 33 year old author of the Declaration of Independence, has lasted for centuries, and – the most amazing thing of

all – it is getting closer to us with every passing year. Talking about him, we could go on and on. The discussion of Jefferson will never end. My first encounter with Jefferson was when I was a student at Moscow University. The Soviet theory of state and law, which I was studying then was based on the presumption of class struggle. But the minds of eager students went to the source. We read books about the history of political thought and of foreign countries law and the constitution of those countries, including one of the most remarkable legal documents of all time, the Constitution of the United States.

At that time it struck me how Jefferson has altered Locke’s famous phrase about the right to life liberty and property. He replaced but one word and spoke of the right to life liberty and the pursuit of happiness. He did this at a time when the profit motive was becoming all- important for the young American nation, indeed almost an obsession with it. He did it even though he saw the enormous importance of property rights as a condition for free life and work.

As a young man, I was no less impressed by Jefferson’s oath which he gave in his early Virginia period, an oath of eternal hostility to any form of tyranny over the mind of man.

***“His hour of triumph, when divine inspiration guided the pen of the 33 year old author of the Declaration of Independence, has lasted for centuries, and – the most amazing thing of all – it is getting closer to us with every passing year.”***



And then in my mature years, when it fell to me to become the leader of a vast complex and conflict-ridden country, I often turned to Thomas Jefferson. He was among those who confirmed me in my belief that without a profound democratization of our society any reform in it would be doomed to fail.

***“For myself I found one thing to be true: Having once begun a dialogue with Jefferson one continues the conversation with him forever.”***



*The former Soviet leader and his wife, Raisa, celebrate Thomas Jefferson's 250th birthday, where Gorbachev delivers the Founder's Day address. (Photo M. Marshall)*

We know that along with the Declaration of Independence Jefferson regarded as his lasting achievement the Virginia Statute for religious tolerance and his initiative and involvement in drafting the Bill of Rights. And, among all freedoms, he regarded the freedom of speech as the primary guarantee of free people's government.

Of all my legislative achievements during the years of perestroika I too value particularly the law on freedom of the press and the law on the freedom of conscience. A draft declaration of citizen's rights was also prepared. It was to become the first section of the constitution of our Union.

I wanted perestroika and reforms in the USSR to proceed in a peaceful and orderly manner. Here, too, I fully agree with Jefferson who said from the very beginning that the revolution as conceived by him should proceed in a lawful manner, and without violence.

The problem of the relationship between right and might is one of the central issues in politics. Jefferson once uttered the following phrase: "I own, I am no friend to very energetic government." I understand him. He was concerned that such a government might jeopardize the citizen's individual freedom and the autonomy of the states.

In his first address as President Jefferson warned how dangerous political intolerance is for the nation. He called on all citizens to unite for the sake of the country's future. As President of the USSR I had similar thoughts and the same intentions.

For myself I found one thing to be true: Having once begun a dialogue with Jefferson one continues the conversation with him forever.

The name of the third President of the United States has now become symbolic of democracy and human rights.

Thomas Jefferson's ideas focused on the supreme achievement of humanistic thought. Montesquieu and Rousseau, Mably and Condorcis, Locke and Bacon were his revered teachers.

It was, however, in the New World, in America that the ideas of freedom for the first time took root in a nation's soil. It was due primarily to Jefferson that these ideas were firmly embedded in the country's laws.

We have to pay tribute to Jefferson's genius and courage. Rising above the superstitions and customs of his time and his milieu, he proclaims the sovereignty of the people, and of the individual. He rejected the centuries-old principle of the primacy of state power as being arbitrary and contrary to free.

He never tired of warning against the abuse of power. He believed in the triumph of freedom. Alas, in the two centuries that followed, the ascent of freedom was a fierce struggle with tyranny and every step in that ascent was enormously difficult, with great sacrifices along the way.

As we approach the year 2000 of the Christian era we see a turning point in world development. One country after another, nation after nation, have now embarked on the road of democracy. As a rule, they did it without using the weapons of war. The march of freedom has finally become worldwide.

In the last years Jefferson once said, confidently and prophetically, that the ideas of freedom will spread throughout the world. Men, he said, will burst the chains under which ignorance and superstition has persuaded them to bind themselves and will assume the blessing and security of self-government.

Yet the road toward freedom is endless. Again and again, it opens new horizons and confronts us with doubts. It will be no exaggeration to say that the world is at a threshold of new scientific and philosophical discoveries, of new values and new goals.

By his philosophy and action Jefferson built into the American political system a paradigm

of evolutionary change. Thanks to that the US political history has been a series of adjustments that have changed your society while assuring its stability.

The principles of historical analysis require that political leaders be judged by what they were able to do within the context of their time. Recently – not just in connection with this anniversary, there has been a lot of debate about Jefferson's attitude towards slavery. It is my view that Jefferson's contradictory position on that was a direct consequence of his fundamental rejection of revolutionary assaults on society's existing structures.

Thinking about the crucial moments in the history of nations, one comes to an unexpected conclusion: however different are the circumstances of time and place, the political leaders who happen to be at the pinnacle of power during such moments have to confront similar challenges. Particularly when the issues are freedom and democracy.

Before this trip to the land of Jefferson I was refreshing in my memory the epic story of the American revolution and the development of the democratic system in the United States. I found striking similarities there with what is happening in my country, Russia.

Let me just mention the principal issues which are today at the center of fierce political struggle in my country. A presidential or parliamentary republic? The principle of the division of powers; how to implement it so as to make sure that the system of checks and balances creates a political equilibrium instead of degenerating into a destructive confrontation.

Preserving the balance of interests in a society that is in transition to a market economy, with the attending dramatic social differentiation. Central government and the rights of members of the federation. These are all issues that the founding fathers of the United States also had to face in one form or another.

For us there is a special value in the experience of American federalism, preserving a balance between the interests of the federation and those of the states. There is, however, a special

character to our country, one that we cannot afford to ignore: it is the special status of ethnic entities as members of our Federation. We have therefore to find a special approach to the issue of federalism.

From his retirement, Jefferson wrote to one of his correspondents: "Laws and institutions must go hand in hand with the progress of the human mind. We might as well require man to wear still the coat which fitted him as a boy as civilized society to remain ever under the regimen of their barbarous ancestors."

At the thresholds of the new millennium mankind feels how tight the old coat has become. The 20th century is ending in a profound crisis, in effect a crisis of an entire era in civilization.

The roots of that crisis are in man himself, in his consciousness and his demands, in his mentality and philosophy. The signs of crisis vary from one country to another. But its profound causes and implications affect all of us.

In all probability, the only way to respond to this general crisis is through a reinterpretation of the principles of freedom in all its aspects and manifestations.

The pursuit of happiness, which is inherent in humankind, is an eternal process. Each century and every nation have their own understanding of this principle, seeking, to the extent possible, to realize it. In this day and age, however, nowhere can this pursuit succeed without accord with the main principles of freedom.

Today, at the watershed of a new civilization, our most important challenge is to learn the lessons of the past, to assess the road traveled by us and by others, and to understand that all of us have a common destiny.

These are the days when Thomas Jefferson is honored not only by the citizens of the United States but by all those who feel duty bound to respect the legacy of the past.

The time of Thomas Jefferson had its unique character, never to be repeated.

But it does have some important features reminiscent of our time.

For both Jefferson's time and ours are periods of profound and dramatic historic change.

***“The pursuit of happiness, which is inherent in humankind, is an eternal process. Each century and every nation have their own understanding of this principle, seeking, to the extent possible, to realize it. In this day and age, however, nowhere can this pursuit succeed without accord with the main principles of freedom.”***



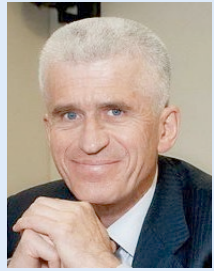
### Anecdotes from Gorbachev's speechwriter

*We were flying in a private plane to the United States in early April 1993. There were several things to do. But the first, and probably the main one, was the 250th anniversary of Jefferson, the author of the Declaration of Independence and the country's third president. I was doing my usual thing, the craft of speech writing. I was polishing and polishing the speech that Mikhail Sergeyevich was to deliver at the University of Virginia, which was founded by Jefferson.*

\* \* \*

*I did not have any preparatory draft for my version of Gorbachev's University speech [University of Virginia]. The President has never given me any written notes. He clearly preferred the personal oral dialogue. This is his (socratic) manner of thinking.*

*During that visit we (he and I) spent together at least one whole evening in his suite giving last touches to his upcoming speech. Raisa Maximovna has personally brought in an enormous plate of salami to save us from starvation. It was my most memorable visit to USA.*



**Victor Borisovich Kuvaldin,**  
Professor, Moscow School of Economics  
(Moscow State University)

The changes, of course, are substantially different.

Two and half centuries ago mankind was entering the extremely promising era of industrial civilization, an era of machines which has benefitted people so much, but has also brought about a multiplicity of problems, disasters and tragedies.

Today, the humankind is stepping toward a post-industrial civilization. No one can yet say what kind of civilization it will be. One thing, however, is clear: it must place man at its center. Without that we simply cannot survive. Today, facing a new frontier, we must again turn to the lessons of our great predecessors. We must ask ourselves what were the political principles and ethical values that they chose as their guide, as their lodestar.

Thomas Jefferson's first and most valuable lesson, no less important – perhaps more important today than in the years of the American Revolution, is the lesson of humanism. A lesson of respect for the human being, for the unalienable rights and freedoms with which men were endowed by their creator.

Can we say today man's rights to life, freedom and the pursuit of happiness have already been guaranteed? No, we cannot. The world

today witnesses numerous violations of these rights. Today Jefferson's famous formula is more than an injunction: it is a reproach to the successor generation that have not yet fulfilled his dream.

Jefferson's life and work is a testimony to the great political leader's ability to absorb, understand and apply the supreme achievements of his time's political and social thought, to synthesize them in practical action.

I am convinced that in our time, the willingness and ability to create a practical synthesis of what is most valuable in the vast heritage of mankind's collective mind, are as necessary as ever before. For this is the only way by which we can address the challenges we are facing now.

Jefferson's other very important lesson comes from his insistence on uniting all the nation's forces around a policy that looks to the future. Jefferson was categorically against any attempt to split the nation, against, as he put it, the despot's old way of using one part of the nation in order to keep the rest of it in chains. He called for equal rights to all and special privileges to none.

Over the past two centuries life provided much proof of the validity of this attitude, and of the mortal dangers of dividing the people, setting them against one another.

In this day and age it is only a national and international consensus of opinion on the vital problems of our time, a consensus jointly reached and equally applied, that is capable of becoming a guise for mankind as it faces the gigantic complexities and obstacles in the path of its progress.

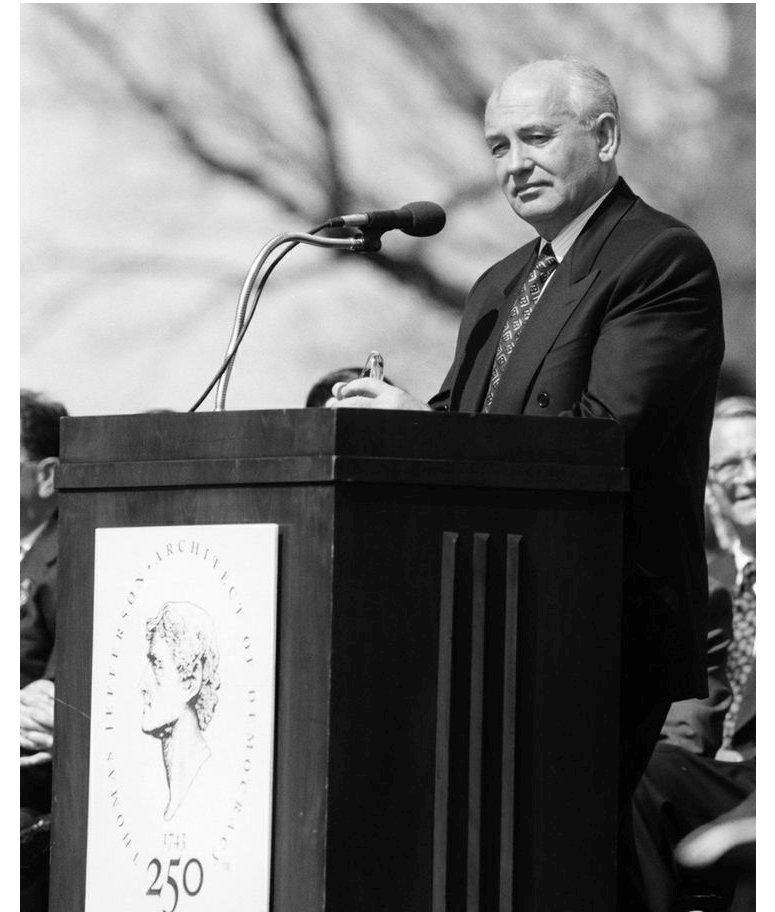
Today, the human community is at a crossroads. The choice it will make will shape its future. This underscores the role and the responsibility of political action and political leaders. Political leaders today must not set their sight, as was customary before, on the class, group, or even national interests. Their calling is to perceive the interests of the entire international community, the interests of global progress. May the Jeffersonian ideals of freedom – of every nation choosing freely its road to democracy and peace – may those ideals never fade from their minds. Thomas Jefferson was recognized in his lifetime as a great political leader. But it may be today that we feel the magnetism of his personality and see the magnitude and power of his ideas even better than did his contemporaries.

## At Monticello

### 250<sup>th</sup> Birthday of Thomas Jefferson, April 13, 1993 – Afternoon Program President Mikhail Gorbachev (Transcript of translation)

Thank you, thank you very much on this great day. I'm very happy, I'm very pleased to be here with all of you to attend on this wonderful day, the national celebration of the occasion of the 250th birthday of Thomas Jefferson. It did not take me too long to decide when it was suggested to me that I might want to attend the celebration of Jefferson's 250th birthday. I accepted almost immediately, without hesitation, because Jefferson has meant a lot to me for a long time. But a few days ago when I was already here I was told that one of your major newspapers in an article wondered, "Why is it that the former General Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist party will be attending the national celebration of the 250th anniversary of the birth of Thomas Jefferson, the third president of the United States?" In responding to this I would like very much to support what the Governor has just said and what he also said yesterday when he spoke about change, a global process of / change, a process of change that is also affecting the American society. And the fact that a newspaper responded in this way to my participation in this important event which is ideally not just a national celebration but an international celebration. This fact shows that some things probably need to change in your country too. And I would like very much to support the words of President Bill Clinton as read by Senator Robb in President Clinton's letter to this gathering who also spoke of the need for change in this country as it is now, and expressed his conviction that the American people will measure up to this new challenge of change.

I've been told that another respected American newspaper has lashed out against Thomas Jefferson recently, wondering whether at this time we should really emphasize the importance of President Jefferson that much. The allusion was made to the fact that Jefferson did not venture to make the most important step, he did not abolish slavery in this country. And even today, it was said from this rostrum that he was a complicated man and had a complicated life. I think this is less important than the other thing. What's important to me is that Jefferson understood the challenge of his time.



***"Let us learn the lessons of Thomas Jefferson in order to understand the challenges of our time and in order to be equal to those challenges here in America, in Russia and in all continents of the world."***

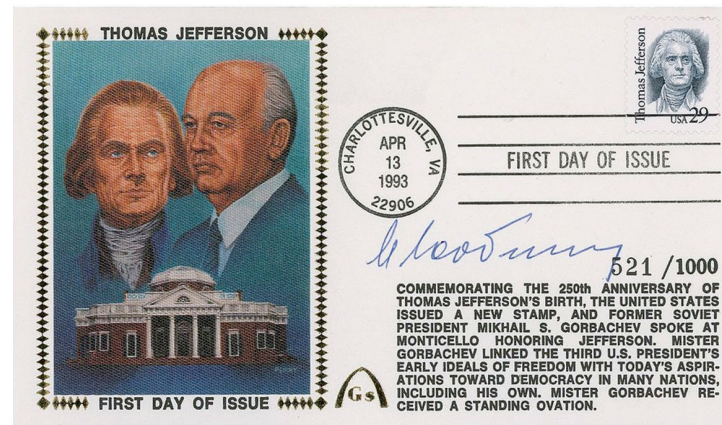
In this time of transition he was able by his philosophy and by his political action to measure up to the challenge of his time. So let us not ask too much of Thomas Jefferson, but let us ask ourselves, and let us ask others who follow Jefferson whether we have done enough. Let us learn the lessons of Thomas Jefferson in order to understand the challenges of our time and in order to be equal to those challenges here in America, in Russia and in all continents of the world.





Monticello, home of Thomas Jefferson.

During the crucial years of my leadership of the Soviet Union I worked together with a whole generation of political leaders from the East and in the West who were able to understand the challenge of our times, who were able to understand that the times were dangerous, and together we were able to end the Cold War and to begin a new era in international relations.



I just spoke with George Bush who was my counterpart and who was my friend. He said he was very pleased that during these days of celebration I am here in Virginia in the native state of Thomas Jefferson. So let us today, on this tremendous occasion say that we will sup-

port those politicians, those political leaders who will keep the voice of the people, who will understand the challenges of their time and who will work for a better life for their people. Let us vote for those politicians who are thinking not just about how to win the next election, but about how to be equal to the burden of responsibility. Here in Virginia, during these days that I've spent here I've met many, very good people who represent your commonwealth, who represent the citizens of Virginia, and I feel that many of them are not thinking merely about their local problems, but about America, and who want America to again pick up momentum, to pick up dynamism, and to again meet the challenge of leadership in this new world of democratic change. And I thank both the organizers of this important, national celebration, I also thank those changes that made it possible for this event to take place and for me to attend this event and for me to talk to you in this sincere and candid way, face to face with you.

When I left the plane a few days ago it was a pouring rain, I wish you some good rains. And now I've been tanning myself here in this wonderful sun. I wish you a lot of sun. You need a lot of sun. I wish prosperity to the land of Virginia, to the native land of Thomas Jefferson. Thank you.

***"So let us today, on this tremendous occasion say that we will support those politicians, those political leaders who will keep the voice of the people, who will understand the challenges of their time and who will work for a better life for their people. Let us vote for those politicians who are thinking not just about how to win the next election, but about how to be equal to the burden of responsibility."***

# A Spiritual Appreciation

by Sri Chinmoy



## Thomas Jefferson – A Divinely Talented Man

The light always has to be embodied by great noble individuals.

Thomas Jefferson came with infinite, infinite light, not only for his country, but also for the rest of the world. Light exists; dire darkness exists. We hope that one day light will transform darkness into light.

Jefferson's vision elevated the consciousness of the world in the twinkling of an eye. The light that he wanted to show his country and the light that he wanted his country to bring forward was so badly misunderstood!

No other President, no other American, has done or perhaps will ever do so much for the progress of the American consciousness as Thomas Jefferson has done. Countries other than America that have developed inner vision will appreciate Jefferson much more than America

The essential qualities of Thomas Jefferson were clarity, luminosity and vastness. Jefferson was the most divinely talented man of his time. He covered quite a few fields in every walk of life, and he went a considerable distance in each. In his case mind, body, vital, heart, everything went together. This moment he was a musician, this moment he was a sculptor, this moment he was a man of brain, this moment he was a physical, earthly labourer. God gave him capacities in many walks of life and he used them well. To become the happiest man is the most difficult thing on earth, and that he was."



*Sri Chinmoy (1931–2007), philosopher, poet, humanitarian and peace-server led twice-weekly meditations for peace at the United Nations for 37 years. His work was devoted to bringing to the fore, articulating and fostering the spiritual dimension of the world organisation. Sri Chinmoy saw the United Nations not merely as a political institution but as "the Heart-Home of the World-Body" and the focal point of an emerging "world-oneness". For the United Nations to develop to maturity and to fulfill its divinely intended mission, he believed, its inner reality must be recognized and must function in concert with its outer reality.*

## Mikhail Gorbachev – A Man in a Million

In my humble opinion, President Gorbachev is the world's greatest man. He could have acted like his predecessors, like Stalin and others, but his heart came to the fore. Now there is one Berlin; previously there were two Berlins. He was the main instrument to liberate Hungary, Czechoslovakia, Poland and so many other countries in the Eastern Bloc. I am not saying he was the only instrument, but he was the main instrument to liberate those countries. I know how difficult it is to unite two countries, but he has done it. Because of him, there is now one Germany.

President Gorbachev showed how human beings can be united. In his case, he acted. Many other political figures, forgive me, only talk about peace. One moment they propose world peace; the next moment they drop bombs somewhere. They use the term 'nuclear weapon reduction'; then we see that they are increasing their weapons. But in President Gorbachev's case, when he said something, he did it. That is why I take him as the world's greatest living figure.

What President Gorbachev has done for humanity is far beyond our imagination. It far exceeds anybody else's achievement. Over the centuries, people have achieved many, many things; but history will bear witness to the fact that there was one person on earth who ended the Cold War, who gave us a new hope: that we could depend on each other, we could trust each other, we could walk and run together. That was President Gorbachev. He made us feel that there should be no fear, no doubt in our lives; we belong to a oneness-world-family.

He is the champion of champions to unmistakably improve the world situation.

For him, peace is not a mere dictionary word. In him, peace is a living reality, a sleepless and all-illuminating reality that lovingly and self-givingly inspires the mind and feeds the heart of humanity.



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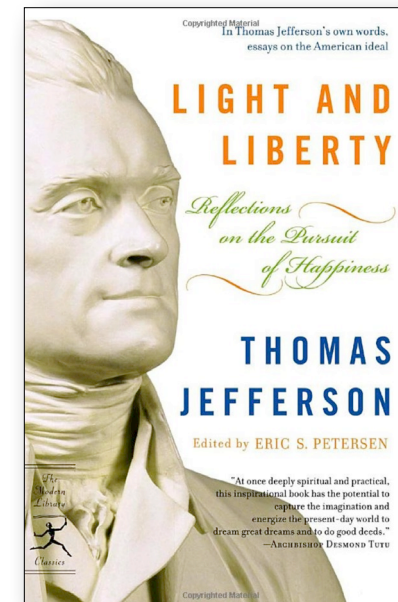
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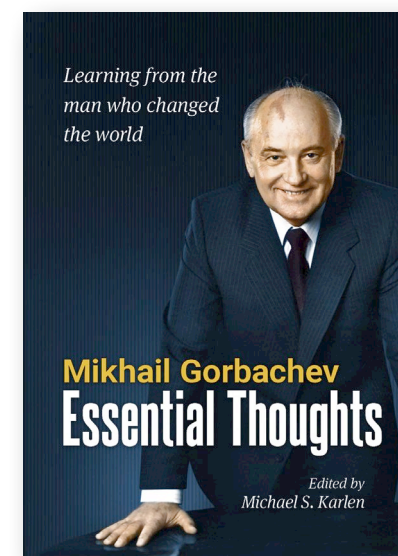


## “Light and Liberty: Reflections on the Pursuit of Happiness”

(Modern Library Classics) Random House, 2005  
by Thomas Jefferson, Author – Eric Petersen (Editor)

Were Thomas Jefferson alive to read this book, he would recognize every sentence, every elegant turn of phrase, every lofty, beautifully expressed idea. Indeed, every word in the book is his. In an astonishing feat of editing, Eric S. Petersen has culled the entirety of Thomas Jefferson's published works to fashion thirty-four original essays on themes ranging from patriotism and liberty to hope, humility, and gratitude. The result is a lucid, inspiring distillation of the wisdom of one of America's greatest political thinkers.

[To order, please click here \(Electronic Version\)](#)



## Mikhail Gorbachev “Essential Thoughts”

This book sets out the ideas and ideals, the spirit and vision that guided Mikhail Gorbachev in his world-changing agenda, in a concise form. It also offers Gorbachev's insights into how each of us can help to restore humanist values and personal responsibility as the foundation of global politics.

This wealth of wisdom is an invaluable resource for overcoming the huge social and environmental challenges that humanity faces today. The boundless optimism and confidence of this colossal world figure can inspire each of us to play our role, large or small, in helping to create a sustainable and peaceful future for our planet earth and all its inhabitants.

[To order, please click here \(Electronic Version\)](#)



*"The God who gave us life gave us liberty at the same time."*

*– Thomas Jefferson*

*"Political leaders today must not set their sight, as was customary before, on the class, group, or even national interests. Their calling is to perceive the interests of the entire international community, the interests of global progress.*

*May the Jeffersonian ideals of freedom – of every nation choosing freely its road to democracy and peace – may those ideals never fade from their minds. Thomas Jefferson was recognized in his lifetime as a great political leader. But it may be today that we feel the magnetism of his personality and see the magnitude and power of his ideas even better than did his contemporaries."*

*– Mikhail Gorbachev*

*"The pursuit of happiness is part and parcel of human nature. Every people in every era have the opportunity to attain this lofty goal. But nowhere is this possible unless it is consonant with the basic principles of liberty.*

*I believe that humanity might have avoided many tragedies and calamities if we had always borne this in mind."*

*– Mikhail Gorbachev on Light and Liberty, a compilation of Thomas Jefferson's writings by Eric Petersen*