



# Waiting for the Day

July 4, 2025

Towards the end of their lives, former President John Adams asked former President Thomas Jefferson whether he would live his life over again.

The third president answered in the affirmative: “I think with you, that it is a good world on the whole; that it has been framed on a principle of benevolence, and more pleasure than pain dealt out to us.”

Not everyone agrees, of course. Jefferson called these people “gloomy and hypochondriac minds,” who “always count that the worst will happen because it may happen.”

Jefferson has a challenge to those whom we today call “the black-pilled”: “How much pain have cost us the evils that have never happened!” Jefferson confessed to lacking hope sometimes, but not as often as the perpetually gloomy.

Those of us who follow the news often have occasion for gloom—or alarm. But on July Fourth it is appropriate to remember the council of these two leaders of Independence.

In 1826, as Jefferson and Adams approached their inevitable demises, both struggled—and succeeded—in their final goals: to make it to Independence Day.

On the Third, Jefferson inquired, more than once, about whether it was the Fourth yet, wrote Albert Jay Nock at the end of his *Jefferson* (1926), “and when told at last that it was, he appeared satisfied. He died painlessly at one o’clock in the afternoon, about five hours before his old friend and fellow, John Adams; it was the only time he took precedence of him, having been all his life ‘secondary to him in every situation,’ except this one.”

According to Adams [family lore](#), when Adams died a few hours later, he said, “Jefferson survives.”

Wrong, as a point of fact. But in spirit?

On Independence Day, we should ask ourselves what of the founding survives.

Unlike the actual lives of those who made our Independence, and, to [paraphrase](#) Tom Paine, we can start Independence anew. And as John Adams *definitely* said on his last day, “Independence forever!”

This is Common Sense. I’m Paul Jacob.