



## These Difficult States

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I've been a U.S. citizen for more than a quarter of the 250 years that there has been a United States.

Proud to be an American? Yes. Not because my country, or more specifically our *government*, has always been spectacular, or even in the right. I've taken a few lumps battling against the government.

More than "proud to be an American," which was admittedly an accident of birth, I'm proud of America. Even with all its faults, this country has been the greatest force for good, for freedom, for peace, for human dignity in the entire history of the world.

Certainly, I get no personal credit for the revolution. I wasn't around. I had no hand in writing the Declaration of Independence or the First Amendment. But I can recite parts.

And defend them against modern foes.

No blame goes to me for slavery — or any glory for ending it. Likewise, I didn't storm the beaches of Normandy or plant the flag at Iwo Jima. I'm honored, however, to know men who did. Without those American kids, Europe and Asia would have been completely conquered by regimes of unspeakable evil.

Those GIs were billionaires . . . saving truly billions of lives, physically and spiritually.

We Americans — and the whole world — owe a grand debt to the ideals of the American Revolution and the blood and courage of Americans of yesteryear. One we can never fully repay.

But we can pay it forward. By fighting to keep the Republic alive and well.

I think we all sense that these current times are those "that try men's souls." There are internal forces ripping at the fabric of our culture as well as militarized authoritarian forces on the march abroad.

The first 250 years proved difficult; the next 250 may even be more so. But we say "The United States of America," not "The United States of Easy."

This is Common Sense. I'm Paul Jacob.