



# The University Conservative

A collection of ideas, experiences,  
and articles from the vibrant  
network of conservative-thinking  
students and social media users.

# Proclamations of Thanksgiving

By Garrett Smith

Everyone is familiar with Thanksgiving. It is a time when families and friends come together to celebrate all that they have been given, and to celebrate the opening of the Christmas season. Most people are familiar with the story of the pilgrims reaching Plymouth Rock and exchanging meals with Native Americans, but many people are unfamiliar with the fact that two of our most admired and respected presidents – George Washington and Abraham Lincoln – are responsible for the celebration of Thanksgiving as we know it. Although other politicians and various people had earlier proclaimed a day of Thanksgiving, it was Washington and Lincoln who formed the foundation of this day of thanks as we now celebrate it.

Shortly after our nation’s founding, President Washington decided it was time for a day of dedication to God, in thanks for the new nation and all that He had bestowed upon Washington and the country. On October 3, 1789, in New York City, Washington stated, “Whereas it is the duty of all Nations to acknowledge the providence of Almighty God, to obey His will, to be grateful for His benefits, and humbly to implore His protection and favor, and whereas both Houses of Congress have by their joint Committee requested me ‘to recommend to the People of the United States a day of public thanksgiving and prayer to be observed by acknowledging with grateful hearts the many signal favors of Almighty God especially by affording them an opportunity peaceably to establish a form of government for their safety and happiness.’”



Thanksgiving would later be celebrated on November 26 of that year.

Flash forward to 1863. The Civil

War had been raging for two years. The tide of the war, however, had just turned in favor of the Union, as the Confederate Army had suffered a significant defeat at Gettysburg, Pennsylvania, just months earlier. On October 3, 1863, 74 years after Washington’s proclamation, President Lincoln echoed Washington’s call for a day of thanks and celebration. “The year that is drawing towards its close, has been filled with the blessings of fruitful fields and healthful skies. To these bounties, which are so constantly enjoyed that we are prone to forget the source from where they come, others have been added, which are of so extraordinary a nature, that they cannot fail to penetrate and soften even the heart which is habitually insensible to the ever-watchful providence of Almighty God. Following Lincoln’s proclamation, Thanksgiving was celebrated on the last Thursday in November, until it was changed to the fourth Thursday in November under Franklin D. Roosevelt.



After Washington’s presidency, Thanksgiving was celebrated for a short time, until it was discontinued by Thomas Jefferson. It was Lincoln who revived it, and it was made a federal holiday under his watch. Although we have Washington and Lincoln to thank for this day of celebration, we must not forget who to ultimately thanks, and this is God, as well as his son, Jesus Christ, giving us all that we have and for saving us. How horrible it is for someone to say that our nation did not have some sort of Almighty anointing, when President Washington himself was the first president to proclaim a national day of thanks. Hopefully, America will continue to remember ourselves as “One nation, under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.”

# The Trouble with Tariffs

By Matt Zupon

As many remember from last December, President Trump scored a major victory among conservative voters, the GOP, and for our country alike when he passed the overwhelmingly inclusive tax cuts. The tax cuts saw an almost instant reaction, with over 460 companies (and counting) giving bonuses or pay raises to over 4 MILLION hard working people in America, according to atr.org.

After a year of a booming stock market and the amazing economic relief as mentioned above, one would think that President Trump mastered the economic part of the Presidency. One would think this too as the man has surmounted a net worth of well over \$3.1 billion (via Forbes) even following a self-funded national campaign. And while I, along with many conservatives I know, commend Trump's relatively sound and impressive economic agenda, we must realize the looming trouble of tariffs.

Earlier this year, President Trump announced a stiff tariff on washing machines and then later imposed a massive tariff regarding steel (25% tariff) and aluminum (10% tariff) in hopes of spurring an economic comeback of factory jobs, like the auto industry. As a patriotic American, I wince with pain when I see once booming cities filled with jobs from Ford collapse, however, the President must have skipped over past tariffs in the history books. Let's take a look back at what happened in the past with massive tariffs.

To jog your memory, let's look at tariffs passed under George W. Bush. In March of 2002, then-President George W. Bush sought to implement a steel tariff, ranging from 8-30%. The tariffs meant to jog production in the United States and create more jobs at home, however, they acted adversely. Bush wanted the tariffs to last until 2005, but economic advisors to the President strongly suggested he end the tariffs, which he did in 2003. A study by the Consuming Industries Trade Action (CITAC) found that almost 200,000 people lost their jobs due to this year-long tariff, and the U.S. International Trade Commission (ITC) found that "a central estimate of a welfare loss of \$41.6 million" occurred due to the tariffs imposed by President Bush.

And who could forget the disastrous presidency

of Herbert Hoover, the spearheader of the Great Depression? Who else remembers the Smoot-Hawley tariff on crops, which 1000+ economists urged him to veto? Despite this, President Hoover signed the bill into law, damaging an already frail American economy to nearly extinction. Wall Street suffered almost immediately after this disastrous legislation passed, and traces of the Smoot-Hawley tariff could attribute to the unfolding of the Dust Bowl.

To quote President Ronald Reagan from his joint address to Congress in 1983, "As the leader of the West and as a country that has become great and rich because of economic freedom, America must be an unrelenting advocate of free trade." This quote should send an economic signal to our current administration and those representing us in Washington. Free trade encourages competition, keeps prices lower for the middle class American, and helps factory workers expand their horizons and get better jobs to support themselves and their families. Everything takes time.

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