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Message on the Birthday of Alexis de Tocqueville

July 29, 2026

Today our Nation honors the life, legacy, and enduring wisdom of Alexis de Tocqueville, a great witness to the promise of our young Republic and one of the most brilliant political minds in the history of the world.

In May of 1831, French magistrate Alexis de Tocqueville arrived on American soil for the first time, beginning 9 months of travel to study the moral foundations of our country and observe the animating forces behind the American way of life. From the bustling streets of Boston and New York to the bayous of Louisiana and the sprawling coastlines of Michigan and Wisconsin, Tocqueville traveled thousands of miles, taking copious notes and speaking with countless Americans to better understand the strength and success of our new system of government. Tocqueville had arrived in our Nation as a stranger, but marveling at the faith, self-reliance, and steadfast civic spirit of our forefathers, he fell in love with the American people.

Upon returning to France, Tocqueville published "Democracy in America," one of the most profound reflections on political and human nature ever put to paper. "In America, I saw more than America," he wrote. "I sought the image of democracy itself, with its inclinations, its character, its prejudices, and its passions." He found America's strength in her churches, town halls, and city squares, but most of all, he saw it in the hearts of hard-working, God-fearing Americans who love their families, their homeland, and their freedom.

Tocqueville's writings remind us that freedom and democracy cannot survive without morality and public virtue and that extremism, bureaucracy, and apathy are the surest paths to tyranny. For these reasons, my administration is working tirelessly to defend our Nation's longstanding traditions of sovereignty, freedom, and faith in Almighty God. We are restoring pride in our heritage, defending religious liberty, strengthening families, and ensuring that our children are taught to love their country, honor our Constitution, and respect our great American flag. In this work, we are guided by the same truth Tocqueville recognized 195 years ago: A people who wish to remain free must remain worthy of freedom.

Today, on what would have been his 221st birthday, Tocqueville's words remind us that the greatness of America lies in the enduring principles of liberty, self-government, and the character of our people, and we recommit to a future that cherishes the blessings of freedom and restores America as one glorious Nation under God.

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