

## Anniversary of the SS Patrick Henry by William Ironstone

The job of being President of the United States in good times may be difficult enough for any one person to handle but to be sitting in the hot seat as Franklin D. Roosevelt did would make any person crumble.

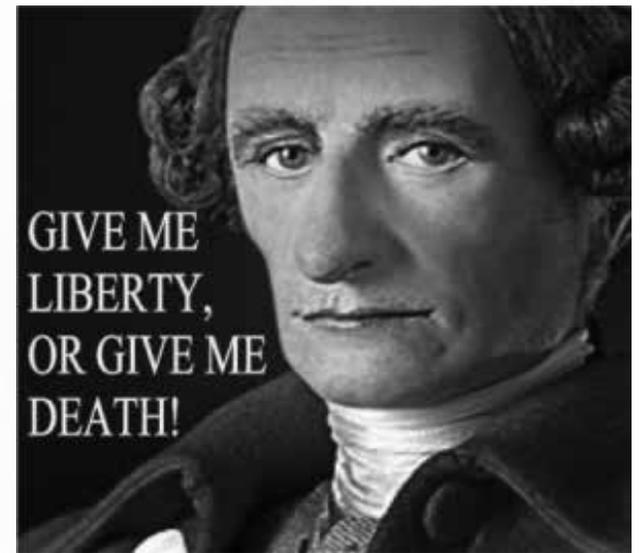
First there was the Great Depression that came when the stock market failed. As he took over America's began to look brighter and filled with hope, day by day. That was followed by the entry of the United States into World War II.



"Eastine Cowner, a former waitress, at work on the Liberty ship SS George Washington Carver at the Kaiser shipyards, Richmond, California, in 1943. One of a series taken by E. F. Joseph on behalf of the Office of War Information documenting the work of African-Americans in the war effort."

Union via deliveries through Iran. 18 American shipyards built 2,710 Libertys between 1941 and 1945, easily the largest number of ships produced upon one design.

In the speech delivered at the launching, Roosevelt referred to Patrick Henry's "Give me Liberty, or give me Death!" speech of March 23, 1775. Roosevelt said that this new class of ships would bring liberty to Europe, which gave rise to the name "Liberty Ship". Passing the "Act to Further Promote the Defense of the United States" by Roosevelt was visionary in nature. It was signed into law on March 11, 1941, which is a year and a half after the outbreak of World War II in Europe in September 1939 and nine months before the U.S. entered the war in December 1941. It was an even more brilliant move to name the first Liberty Ship after Patrick Henry, who is considered one of our Founding Fathers and he is credited for the phrase "Give Me Liberty or Give Me Death!". Henry also led the opposition to the Stamp Act of 1765.



Patrick Henry

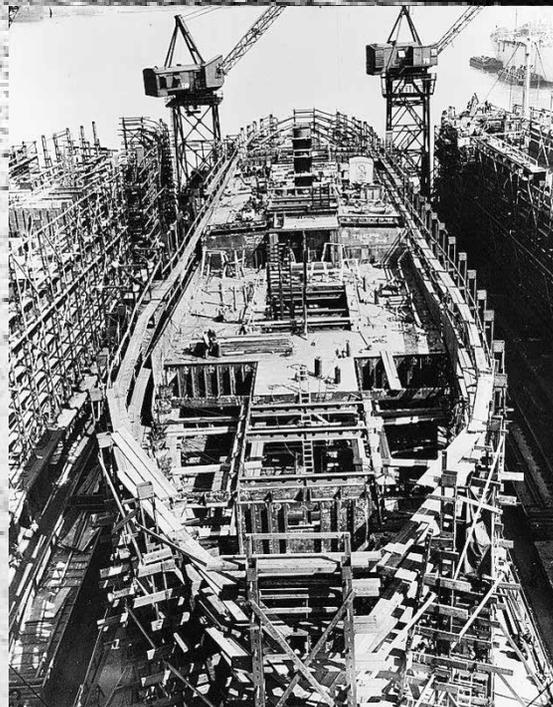
Along with Samuel Adams and Thomas Paine, Henry is regarded as one of the most influential champions of Republicanism and an invested promoter of the American Revolution and its fight for independence. After the Revolution, Henry was a leader of the anti-federalists in Virginia. His opposition to the Constitution because he feared that it endangered the rights of the States as well as the freedoms of individuals, helped gain adoption of the Bill of Rights.

The SS Patrick Henry was sponsored by Ilo Browne Wallace, wife of Vice President Henry A. Wallace, with Mrs. Robert H. Jackson, wife of the Associate Justice of



Based on research conducted on FDR, although he came from a privileged family and his cousin Theodore Roosevelt was the President of the United States at the time, I am certain there were many sleepless nights tossing and turning over the situation in Europe with Hitler's power on the rise as he was a man for the common men and women. It's certain he felt helpless as there was nothing he could do because it is the United States Congress who issues the order to go to war, not the President. And at that time the sentiment of the country was they wanted to remain neutral. He did however come up with a plan in a way that if proposed to Congress, they would go along with it. And it did!

The Lend-Lease policy is formally titled "An Act to Further Promote the Defense of the United States." It was a program under which the United States supplied Great Britain, France, the Republic of China and later the USSR and other Allied nations with material between 1941 and August 1945. The Act produced Liberty Ships! Liberty Ships were cargo ships that were built in the United States during World War II. Although the ships were British in conception, they were adapted by the U.S. as they were cheap and quick to build and came to symbolize U.S. wartime industrial output. Based on vessels ordered by Britain to replace ships torpedoed by German U-Boats, they were purchased for the U.S. fleet and for lend-lease deliveries of war material to Britain and to the Soviet



Unemployed Americans Became Employed



FDR Signs Lend-Lease Act

the Supreme Court of the United States, and Madame Bruggmann, wife of the Minister of Switzerland Karl Bruggmann and sister of the vice president. Ilo Wallace christened the ship. The ship's fitting was completed on December 30, 1941.

The maiden voyage for the SS Patrick Henry was to the Middle East. During World War II she made 12 voyages to ports including Murmansk, Trinidad, Cape Town, Naples, and Dakar.

The SS Patrick Henry survived the war but was seriously damaged when she went aground on a reef off the coast of Florida in July 1946. The ship was laid up at Mobile, Alabama, and was scrapped at Baltimore in 1958.