

## **Conner Chu:**

In the ancient land of Rome, there lived a nobleman by the name of Marcus Brutus. His son, Lucius Brutus, was born in 545 BC, and from a young age, possessed a remarkable intellect and cunning that far exceeded his years. A dispute between his father and the tyrannical monarch, King Tarquin, led to Marcus' execution. Brutus, deemed too foolish to pose any future threat, was spared and left to mourn the loss of his beloved father. Yet Brutus proved to be far from foolish. He bided his time, waiting for the perfect opportunity to avenge his father's death and overthrow the corrupt kingdom. He eventually became the leader of a rebellion, a courageous warrior who rallied the people against the oppressive regime. Despite facing incredible challenges and insurmountable odds, Brutus fought on, unyielding and determined. After years of struggle, the rebellion succeeded in toppling the monarchy, and the Roman Republic was established, leading to an era of exponential technological, philosophical, and territorial growth.

Nearly 2,300 years later halfway around the globe, perhaps one of the most influential documents of American history was published: Brutus 1, named in honor of the late Lucius Brutus. In this essay, the Anti-Federalists express their apprehensions about the scope of power granted to the federal government. They argue that the central power stands no meaningful opposition from the constitution or laws of any state. These concerns, written by our founding fathers nearly 250 years ago, are conceivably more important and relevant today than ever before.

Arguably one of the greatest modern examples of such concern is Section 215 of the Patriot Act, which allows government agencies like the NSA to obtain confidential private information from its citizens. As our daily lives grow increasingly dependent on the internet and wireless communication, the government's ability to monitor and track our online activity has become a highly contentious issue. Although the courts have deemed Section 215 constitutional, its potential violation of the right to privacy continues to raise questions. However, usurpations of the rights guaranteed by the Constitution expand far beyond the actions of our government. Censorship of certain viewpoints on social media platforms like Twitter and Facebook also threatens to limit the freedoms outlined in the first amendment, like that of free speech.

In such a rapidly evolving world, it is important that the citizens of any country, especially the United States, continuously question and reflect on the actions of their government. It is only when we downplay and distract ourselves from the events happening around us that our rights quickly disappear. Like Brutus, we must remain level-headed, patient, and opportunistic.