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Editorial

In April 2002 The Historical Society of Pennsylvania held its first Balch Symposium. Conceived and organized in the fall of 2001, our program, like that of so many other institutions, was shaped by the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001. "Strangers in the Land of Strangers: Defining 'American' in Times of Conflict," the title of the symposium, sought to provoke thought and discussion about how Americans, historically, have defined citizenship and the civic community, and, in particular, how those definitions have been challenged and shaped by conflict and national crisis.

Papers presented examined colonial Pennsylvanians' exclusion of native peoples from the civic community, nineteenth-century women's claims to citizenship, nativist responses to Irish Catholic immigrants, the more positive reception of English immigrants, and the struggles of Asian Americans in the twentieth century to preserve their rights and freedoms during times of war. One paper specifically discussed the attacks of September 11. An expanded version of that paper is the featured article in this issue.

Matthew N. Lyons, in "Fragmented Nationalism: Right-Wing Responses to September 11 in Historical Context," looks at the varied responses of right-wing factions to the terrorist attacks and provides them a historical context. The U.S. Right has rarely been unified. According to Lyons, three distinct nationalist ideologies have shaped right-wing nationalism in the twentieth century. Since the end of the cold war, several right-wing factions have emerged, each drawing more or less on these three ideologies to formulate a sense of what it means to be an American at the beginning of the twenty-first century. The tensions

among these factions, illustrated so clearly in their varied responses to the September 11 attacks, highlight the ways in which the themes of ethnicity, sovereignty, state repression, and national morality have shaped conceptions of American identity.

This article is an unusual one for *PMHB*. But, as we continue to debate the role of the state at home and of the United States abroad, I think it is an appropriate one. Through this paper we share with our membership, as we do with every October issue of *PMHB*, some of the exciting programs that have taken place at The Historical Society of Pennsylvania.

Tamara Gaskell Miller
Editor