

## US National Standard in Culture

Henry Luce of *Time*  
*Life-New York*

Roger Williams  
Builder

Source: *Roger Williams*,  
Longacre, 1939



Roger Williams  
Welcomes Persecuted

**Harry Luce of Time-Life:** What Roger Williams is named here as the builder is a builder on to eternity. What person was not builders on to eternity— whether it be Henry Ford, J. Paul Getty of Standard Oil, J. P. Morgan of Morgan Stanley or Bill Paley of CBS.

**MOSES:** It is based on religious faith. It is saying, “I believe Providence would like me to do this with my talent...”

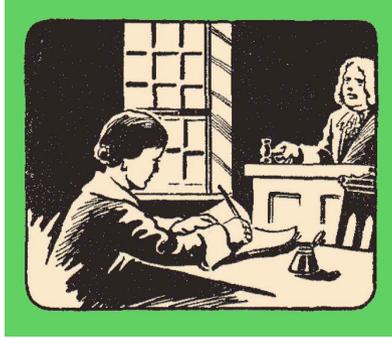
**MOTHER MARY:** The work itself, what work means, must be defined as this, of what Roger Williams, had done personally with the colony for the 27 years.

**ARCHANGEL RAPHAEL:** Were the people who came over on the Mayflower here only for religious liberty? It was to work.

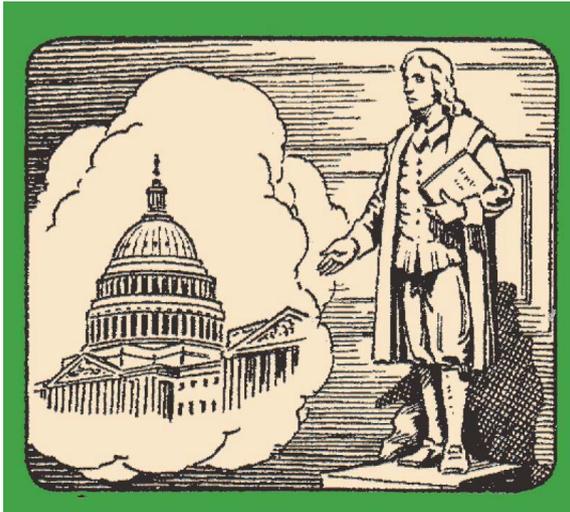
**BELOVED BURNJEH, Physician:** When you see the teenagers listless and only see work as the ATM machine, you are in error.

**MOTHER MARY:** The youth have a right to a religious education!

Roger Williams' mentor—  
Lord Edward Coke,  
the Jurist



**MOSES:** Without the religious education then, as they have attended the public schools, then you must see to it that you understand that life has purpose and meaning. You can find it as working to become a better human being.



first time in history, religious liberty for every man was recognized in civil government as a foundation principle. Roger Williams was the apostle of religious liberty—of soul liberty in the New World. He had the high honor, in the providence of God, of being the first man to establish in practice the emancipation of the conscience of man from the fetters of politico-ecclesiastical rule. He became the harbinger of religious liberty in its true sense and reality, and pointed the true way for the greatest Republic of a free and democratic people. We Americans owe a debt of gratitude to Roger Williams—as preacher, prophet, and statesman—which we cannot pay in any better way than to defend and preserve the precious heritage of civil and religious liberty which he has bequeathed to posterity for the benefit of all mankind.

His ideal of the proper relationship of church and state and his political philosophy and principles of government perhaps cannot be summed up in a more concise form than in his own words:

“The civil sword may make a nation of hypocrites, and anti-Christians, but not one Christian.”  
“Forcing of conscience is a soul-rape.” “Persecution for conscience [hath been] the lancet that letteth [the] blood of kings and kingdoms.” “Man hath no power to make laws to bind conscience.”  
“The civil commonwealth and the spiritual commonwealth, the church, not inconsistent, though independent, the one on the other.” “The civil

magistrate owes to false worshipers, (1) permission, (2) protection."

If this fundamental principle of civil government had always been recognized and followed, there never would have been any religious persecution in this world.

Roger Williams not only believed and taught this principle of government, but he practiced it. After having successfully operated this experiment in Rhode Island for twenty-seven years, he embodied, in 1663, in the memorial charter for the Commonwealth and English Colony of Rhode Island his fundamental tenet, as follows:

"No person within the said colony, at any time hereafter, shall be in any wise molested, punished, disquieted, or called in question, for any differences in opinion, in matters of religion, who do not actually disturb the civil peace of our said colony; but that all and every person and persons may, from time to time, and at all times hereafter, freely and fully have and enjoy his own and their own judgments and consciences, in matters of religious concernments, throughout the tract of land hereafter mentioned, they behaving themselves peaceably and quietly and not using this liberty to licentiousness and profaneness, nor to the civil injury or outward disturbance of others."

In this charter are set forth the matchless provisions which were incorporated one hundred and twenty-six years later in the Federal Constitution

of the United States of America, "Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof," and similar provisions in the respective State constitutions.

Thus Roger Williams became the builder of the ideals of a new nation, which was destined to influence the ideals of many other nations. The equality of all men and of all religions before the law, without special privileges and preferences to any, was the cardinal principle in the government founded by Roger Williams. He not only legislated for his day, but, as he hoped, for "all times hereafter." As long as men conducted themselves "peaceably" and "civilly," they were not to be punished on account of their religious beliefs or practices. No one was to suffer any civil disability by reason of his religious favor, provided he respected the equal rights of all others.

Especially was Roger Williams opposed to any financial alliances between the church and the state such as compelled people to be taxed by the state for the aid and support of any sort of religion. He did not believe that any person elected to public office should ever take advantage of his public office through legislation or the administration of his civil duties, to promote the religious interests of religious organizations, nor should he ever attempt to settle religious controversies by law, or give preference by judicial decisions to religious