

THE GIFT

They started
on June 29
serenading the night
with fireworks
BOOM!
RATA TAT TAT TAT!
BOOM! BOOM! BOOM!
from dusk to midnight.

On the Fourth
the City filled the Park
with Citizens
and splashed dark sky
with exploding color.

Were they celebrating
A Declaration of the Representatives
of the United States of America,
in Congress Assembled
signifying a claim
to Independence
from a consistently condescending, hostile, lawless
King
and his gang of unmentioned
parliamentarians?

Were they celebrating
the sober artistry
of men
organizing a Federal Government
of proposal, negotiation,
compromise,
cooperation
with, for the time, Enlightened
Participation?

Or the sacrifices
of men, women, children, natives
of farmers, artisans, woodsmen, merchants, mariners, gentlemen
contributed to
the defeat of arguably
the greatest military force
on Earth?
(with a lot of help from the French)

Or the steadfast commitment
to the Liberty of Human Rights
and the Justice
of General Welfare,
of Good Law
securing processes
for resolution of dispute
for unfolding the future,
respecting the interests
of the Public
and Persons?

Or were they getting
their grins and merriment
suppressing
the knowledge
that our gluttony, selfishness,
hard-heartedness
and faction,
our relentless mechanized assault
on the natural systems of Earth
have wasted
the Gift
given to us?

Some Reading

- Charles A. Beard: The Republic: Conversations on
Fundamentals, 1944/2017
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