Conclusion

"... all Men are created Equal ..."

The Story of America is, very largely, a prolonged, complex, and sometimes tragic exegesis of those few lines from *The Declaration of Independence*. "All men are created Equal." Yes, all MEN are EQUAL. But who *exactly* are MEN? And the others, those PEOPLE who ARE NOT MEN, what RIGHTS, what LIBERTY, what FUTURE have those who ARE NOT quite ADULTS?

Over the past two hundred years, more PEOPLE, more KINDS of PEOPLE have insisted that they ARE EQUAL and "entitled to certain inalienable RIGHTS." Black PEOPLE, women, American Indians, Poor PEOPLE, gay PEOPLE and now the OLD, the HANDICAPPED and the MORIBUND DEMAND the RIGHT to DECIDE and to DO because they ARE ABLE to KNOW, ABLE to DECIDE. CRIMINALS and the INSANE are INSISTING on the RIGHT to be considered CHANGED and HEALTHY and therefore entitled to DECIDE and to DO.

There are still those who CAN NOT INSIST, CAN NOT DEMAND, are not ABLE TO KNOW or to DO. They remain CHILDREN—without RIGHTS, without CHOICE, without FREEDOM, inhibited from pursuing HAPPINESS as they might wish to. Since they DO NOT KNOW, they CAN NOT DO and they NEED to be CARED FOR . . . without the ABILITY TO DECIDE, they CAN NOT DECIDE and therefore SHOULD NOT DECIDE. Their FUTURE is in the hands of those who DO KNOW, who CAN DECIDE, who TAKE CARE of them. The question remains as painful, as perplexing as ever: EXACTLY which INDIVIDUAL

PEOPLE are ENTITLED to LIVE LIFE FREELY PURSUING HAPPINESS as EQUALS of other MEN?

The history of AMERICA is the Story of EXACTLY who HAS the RIGHT to DECIDE EXACTLY who HAS the RIGHT to DECIDE.