

The Social Contract

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The Social Contract

is published quarterly

© 2019 by The Social Contract Press

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A Note from the Editor

John Tanton and Thirty Years of *The Social Contract*

The inaugural issue of *The Social Contract* quarterly appeared in the Fall of 1990. John Tanton, editor and publisher, answered the question: “Why Another Journal?” by observing that a number of public issues are directly or indirectly influenced by human population growth: its absolute size, distribution, and rate of change. Various individuals and organizations produced pamphlets, newsletters, and books on the issue, but “the lack of any journal dealing with these related topics has meant that there has been no epicenter for their discussion, and no coherent body of literature to which people that come along can be referred.”

To fill this void in the movement to reform mass immigration, John Tanton launched *The Social Contract* to provide a medium where viewpoints from a variety of outlooks could be presented to a receptive audience, where new authors could find a place to publish, and where “classic” items of enduring interest could be reprinted and reintroduced to newer readers. The name of the journal was taken from the time of Rousseau and reflects John Tanton’s belief that “so many of the questions we face are ethical and contractarian ones,” balancing rights and responsibilities.

In 1994, The Social Contract Press was established as an outgrowth of the journal. It has published a number of original titles, such as *The Immigration Invasion* by John Tanton and yours truly to, most recently, Dave Gibson’s compelling, *No Safe Places: Death at the Hands of Illegal Aliens*. In 1995 we released a reprint of Jean Raspail’s apocalyptic novel, *The Camp of the Saints*—by far the most popular title in our catalog. And thanks to the advent of the Internet, articles from *The Social Contract* have reached people worldwide.

In the “Statement of Purpose” included in each issue, John Tanton notes the importance of balancing individual rights with civic responsibilities. In their home town of Petoskey, county seat of Emmet County, Michigan, John and his wife Mary Lou practiced what they preached. This was publicly recognized when, in 2017, Emmet County published a four-part history. Under the heading, “People History Will Remember,” it featured “John and Mary Lou Tanton: Petoskey couple’s impact reaches from Planned Parenthood to the Little Traverse Conservancy, dark-sky protection to U.S. immigration policy.” Author Tamara Stevens continued: “Emmet County would not look the way it does today if Dr. John and Mary Lou Tanton had not moved to Petoskey in 1964. The rolling hills covered in hardwood trees and the sandy beach shorelines could certainly have been sprouting subdivisions and condominiums were it not for the Tantons’ efforts to protect the natural beauty that beckons so many here in the first place.” [cf. *Essence of Emmet, Part IV: 1960 to 2017*. www.emmetcounty.org]

It has been my privilege to have worked with John and Mary Lou Tanton over the past twenty-seven years, and to have been associated with our dedicated writers, editors, and readers. I thank you for your loyalty and encouragement. ■

Wayne Lutton, Ph.D.