

## “Become American” The Culture of Ethnic-American Erasure

“You can go to live in France, but you cannot become a Frenchman. You can go to live in Germany or Turkey or Japan, but you cannot become a German, a Turk, or Japanese. But anyone from any corner of the earth can come to live in America and become an American.”

— Ronald Reagan

A statement meant to be positive, *for the rest of the world*.

But is this true?

And what of ethnic-Americans?

Will they disappear within their own country, amid a world that claims to be American?

It is a dream to come to America and become an American.

But did we forget that Americans have their own identity and culture?

~That Americans have dreams too?

It is all good until it is your own home country being dissolved, into the world.

It is like opening our doors to the town, out of the generosity and humility in our hearts, but we only have one house, one pantry, and enough food for a few. Crumbs are left, but they are not for us. They were for the town.

America has never been uniformly celebratory of mass immigration, not at any point in our history. Native Americans have long expressed a clear truth, colonization harms the native population.

Yet, at every turn, systems have continued to push forward without full regard for the American people. We used to look up to Americans, now we look to heaven, millions of Americans are no longer here.

We are pushing Americans out of their own home, out of the picture, and into memory, and this is why my position is that Americans must maintain their own identity, culture, and defined boundaries within America.

I am reminded of Acadia. A beautiful culture, but it was disturbed. Newcomers tried to take what was the Acadians'. They went to war with the Acadians. They burned their churches. They tried to adopt Acadia as their own. They took our people as slaves. Then they erased their culture.

They changed the language, and all was lost. Except for the spirit that the Acadians held. Even Acadians still forget, but through this spirit, the heart of Acadia lives on.

America today is becoming Acadia.

And so *we remember*.