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## State of the Software Industry, part 2

**Editor's Note:** This is part two of an interview that taps the wit and wisdom of George Washington, John Adams, Benjamin Franklin, Thomas Jefferson, and Abraham Lincoln regarding the state of the software industry.

**Q:** Gentlemen, inspection technology has proven to provide high return on investment, yet it receives far less publicity and use than other glamorous technologies. Why is this?

**Abe:** *A peer review [jury] too often has at least one member who is more ready to hang the peers [panel] than the engineer [traitor].*

**Ben:** *Any engineer [fool] can criticize, condemn, and complain, and most engineers [fools] do.*

**Abe:** *You can fool all the people some of the time, and some of the people all the time, but you cannot fool all the people all of the time.*

**Ben:** *Wise men do not need advice. Fools will not take it.*

**Q:** Is process improvement here to stay or just another fad?

**Thomas:** *A little rebellion now and then is a good thing, and as necessary in the software [political] world as storms in the physical.*

**John:** *Process Improvement [America] is a great, unwieldy body. Its progress is [must be] slow. Like a coach and six, the swiftest horses must be slackened and the slowest quickened, that all may keep an even pace.*

**Ben:** *Each year, one bad habit rooted out, in time ought to make the worst project [man] good.*

**Abe:** *My great concern is not whether you have failed, but whether you are content with your failure.*

**Q:** Why are many organizations struggling with process improvement?

**Abe:** *At what point then is the approach of danger to be expected? I answer, if it ever reach us, it must spring up amongst us. It cannot come from abroad. If destruction be our lot, we must ourselves be its author and finisher.*

**John:** *The right of an organization [a nation] to kill a bad project [tyrant] in case of necessity can no more be doubted than to hang a robber, or kill a flea.*

**Q:** Are new technologies a panacea for the industry's ills?

**Thomas:** *Nothing can stop the man with the right technology [mental attitude] from achieving his goal; nothing on earth can help the man with the wrong technology [mental attitude].*

**Abe:** *The best thing about the future is that it comes only one day at a time.*

**Ben:** *He is the best engineer [physician] that knows the worthlessness of most technologies [medicines].*

**Q:** What do you know about the working conditions of software engineers?

**John:** *Engineers [I] inhabit a weak, frail, decayed tenement; battered by their [my] colleagues [the winds] and broken in on by janitors [the storms], and, from all I can learn, management [the landlord] does not intend to repair.*

**George:** *Few Software Engineers [men] have virtue to withstand the highest bidder.*

**Q:** The industry is quick to jump on new technology bandwagons. Managers in particular seem to treat testimony and hype as fact. Is this dangerous?

**Abe:** *I believe it is an established maxim in morals that he who makes an assertion without knowing whether it is true or false is guilty of falsehood, and the accidental truth of the assertion does not justify or excuse him.*

**Thomas:** *It is as useless to argue with those who have renounced the use of facts [reason] as to administer medication to the dead.*

**Q:** Given the chance, would you like to lead a software development project?

**Thomas:** *I have no ambition to manage [govern] software [men]. It is a painful and thankless job [office].*

—Gary Petersen, Shim Enterprise Inc.