

Celebrate Independence Day, Not The Fourth Of July

This week we celebrate the 242nd birthday of our Constitutional Republic. I would like to suggest that Americans should NOT celebrate the "Fourth of July," since this is just a day on a calendar. Rather, Americans SHOULD celebrate "Independence Day" and their blessed heritage of "liberty under law," which resulted from the courageous actions of our founding fathers.

I would also add that the central importance of what our founders did was intricately bound up in what they believed. And what they believed they expressed concisely and precisely in the document they published on July 4, 1776. Essentially they said:

1. There exists an Eternal God
2. Our rights come from Him
3. The purpose of government is to secure our God-given rights

Recalling and celebrating these firmly held beliefs is the essence of our American heritage and the occasion to pass on the "blessings of liberty" to the next generation.

On July 3, 1776, John Adams, known as the Colossus of Independence, in a letter to his wife Abigail, declared that Independence Day:

"...will be the most memorable epoch in the history of America. I am apt to believe that it will be celebrated by succeeding generations as the great anniversary Festival. It ought to be commemorated, as the Day of Deliverance by solemn Acts of Devotion to God Almighty. It ought to be solemnized with Pomp and Parade, with Shews, Games, Sports, Guns, Bells, Bonfires

and Illuminations from one End of this Continent to the other from this Time forward forever more. You will think me transported with Enthusiasm but I am not. I am well aware of the Toil and Blood and Treasure, that it will cost us to maintain this Declaration, and support and defend these States. Yet through all the Gloom I can see the Rays of ravishing Light and Glory. I can see that the End is more than worth all the Means. And that Posterity will triumph in that Day's Transaction, even although We should rue it, which I trust in God We shall not."

When the thirteen colonies of Great Britain in North America said that the king was not fit to be the ruler of a free people, they declared their independence from his government. This was not only dangerous, but for many proved fatal. Yet, despite the certain calamitous outcome, America's 56 Representatives sealed this declaration with a solemn oath – "For the support of this Declaration, with a firm reliance on the protection of Divine Providence, we mutually pledge to each other our Lives, our Fortunes, and our sacred Honor."

So this Independence Day, while you celebrate American liberty, let's not forget the words of Thomas Paine: "Those who expect to reap the blessings of freedom, must, like men, undergo the fatigue of supporting it."

Happy Independence Day, America!

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