

“Public sentiment is everything.
With it, nothing can fail; without it,
nothing can succeed.”

Abraham Lincoln

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“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 shows, games, sports, guns, bells, bonfires, and illumination, from one end of this continent to the other, from this time forward forevermore. 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...”

John Adams
July 3, 1776

*Happy Birthday
America!*





The American Soul: **Short-remembered, Angry & Impatient... Yet Raising a *Greater* Generation.**

Happy Birthday, America! We hope our annual greeting finds you well and celebrating our uniquely American holiday. “Uniquely American” is almost redundant, but in these challenging times, parts of our American Soul need the reminder.

If you listen to the doubters among us, you'll hear them **talk about a loss of “American exceptionalism,”** as if we've lost our way defending the Western world from the barbaric tyranny of Islamic extremism. **Don't buy this rubbish.** Like the words of the naysayers who claimed fighting the Cold War was futile, their sentiment will eventually rot in the dump of history's footnotes.

Just a few weeks ago we celebrated the 20th anniversary of President Reagan's Berlin Wall speech urging Soviet General Secretary Gorbachev to “Tear down this wall!” Did any of us *really* expect to see it happen? **Make no mistake: the terrorists will fall to the will of free men.**

In fact, Independence Day is the perfect time to give thanks for whom and where we are...and remind ourselves how long it took us to get here: challenging and chaotic early years, during which we kept an almost 100-year lid on our own Civil War...and suffered terribly when that lid came off. **Could we have succeeded immediately, as we demand the Iraqis and Afghans do?** Highly doubtful.

But their new political and economic freedom is driving genuine change in these societies that never knew liberty. **You don't hear much about the burgeoning Iraqi stock or housing markets, or the other “explosions”...in mass communications and ideas occurring in these countries.** It's happening, and men and women who've tasted freedom like this will not give it up easily.

The 1960s throwbacks vainly compare today's conflict to Vietnam. They should grab their bifocals, prescriptions and self-loathing, and retire to the communes of their youth. We're not fighting so-called freedom fighters—we *are* the freedom fighters. They'll argue we're forcing democracy at the barrel of a gun, without acknowledging **our guns are defending young democracies**...and in turn, our own.

Sadly, the cost we're paying to stay on the offensive often becomes almost unbearably high...especially when our collective short memories and our home-grown, blame-America-first **apologists lull us into the comfort and complacency of retreat.** But we can't go back. Nor should we. **Our earlier weak responses,** from the 1970s Iranian hostage crisis on, **ignited and fueled today's war for civilization's future.** Will we move forward into the 21st century or plummet backwards to the 7th?

Amazingly, **today's generation of young Americans has decided.** The 18- to 22-year-olds who volunteer to serve us understand what's at stake. While The Greatest Generation of World War II truly was great, **look at the greater miracle in front of us *right now.*** The WWII generation didn't deal with a hate-America-first opinion elite or a media driven to expose every military mistake or setback. Somehow, the young men and women of today's generation **understand that Iraq and Afghanistan are just two battles in a much larger war.** A war that will determine their future, and in most cases, the future of their unborn children.

These patriots proudly defend the most powerful, yet simultaneously most compassionate, country the world has even known. **A country — and a people — like no other...ever.** They know what we fought for in 1776...and 1861...and 1917...and 1941...and 1951...and 1968...and 1991...and 2001 is worth defending at all costs. **They understand America remains the world's symbol of hope and endless possibilities...**a genuine gift from God that must always be cherished and protected.

So, in John Adams' words, enjoy this great “anniversary festival,” but **don't miss the “rays of ravishing light and glory” who walk among us:** The 21st Century's Greatest Generation defending our liberty as you read this. Our destiny is in good hands! May God always bless America. May God always bless the American Soul.

Happy Independence Day!

Polly, Steve & Lindsay Kaufman with Ariel, the Feline Princess

