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RELEASE: JULY 2, 1982

WHAT THE FOURTH OF JULY MEANS

In the debate now swirling around President Reagan's proposal for a constitutional amendment to restore prayer to the public schools, some liberals are trying to propagate the myth that American was founded on a rock of secularism, and that our liberties are somehow endangered by schoolchildren's prayers. This Fourth of July, which is the 206th anniversary of the declaring of the Declaration of Independence, gives us a good chance to reexamine our nation's religious roots.

The one best way to observe our nation's birthday is to re-read and re-examine our Declaration of Independence, and to rededicate ourselves to its principles and its message. The Declaration of Independence is THE most important document in American history and the most inspired writing in world history that ever flowed from the hand of man alone.

The Declaration of Independence is the official and unequivocal recognition by the American people of their belief and faith in God. It is a religious document from its first sentence to its last. It affirms God's existence as a "self-evident" truth which requires no further discussion or debate.

The nation created by the great Declaration is God's country. The rights it defines are God-given. The actions of its signers are God-inspired. There are five references to God -- God as Creator of all men, God as the supreme Lawmaker, God as the source of all rights, God as the world's supreme Judge, and God as our patron and protector.

The Declaration of Independence declares that each of us is created. If we were created, there must have been a Creator. The Declaration of Independence proclaims that life and liberty are the unalienable gifts of God -- natural rights -- which no person or government can rightfully take away.

The Declaration of Independence declares that each of us is created equal. This means equal before God. It does not mean that all are born with equal capabilities, as

obviously they are not. Nor does it mean that all men can be made equal, as Communist dogma alleges. Obviously and realistically, as your own unique fingerprint proves, each of God's creatures is unequal and different in every other way from every other person who has ever lived or ever will live on this earth.

The Declaration of Independence proclaims that the purpose of government is to secure our God-given unalienable individual rights, and that government derives its powers from the consent of the governed. For the first time in history, government was reduced from master to servant.

The Declaration of Independence comes to us after 206 years in all its pristine purity. Whereas the U.S. Constitution has had to suffer the slings and arrows of outrageous Supreme Court interpretation and judicial distortion, neither the meddling judges nor the bungling bureaucrats have been able to confuse or distort the Declaration of Independence. As the Declaration was in the beginning, it is now and ever shall be because it proclaims truth and facts which are not subject to change or amendment.

The Supreme Court, which has banned God from the public schools, has not been able to censor Him out of the Declaration of Independence. The Supreme Court has forbidden public school children to declare their dependence upon God, but the unchangeable Declaration of Independence forever pledges the firm reliance of the American people on the continued protection of God's Divine Providence.

The holiday we celebrate on the Fourth of July is not the anniversary of the start or finish of the American Revolution, the writing or ratification of the U.S. Constitution or the Bill of Rights, the Boston Tea Party, the battles of Bunker Hill, or George Washington's Inauguration. The youth of America should learn the lesson that it is the anniversary of America's great religious document: the Declaration of Independence.

Knowledge of our Declaration of Independence should be required of all high school graduates. They should also be taught that many of the men who signed it paid for their courage with their lives and fortunes; and that's why we are able to enjoy our freedom and independence.