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THANKSGIVING THANKS

The United States will soon celebrate its 200th birthday, but our observance of Thanksgiving Day is 352 years old. It offers a good opportunity for each of us to count our blessings of living in the freest and most prosperous nation the world has ever known.

I'm thankful to the Pilgrim Fathers -- the same ones who gave us the first Thanksgiving at Plymouth Colony -- that they had the good judgment to abandon their naive a:rdnonsensical ideas of communal living under which the workers and the loafers shared equally in a common fund. When they saw the error of their early socialist ex periment, they changed to a system of private property and individual ownership, allowing each man to keep his own earnings -- a wise move which started America on the road to abundant harvests and economic prosperity.

I'm thankful that the signers of the Declaration of Independence had the faith to proclaim, in this fundamental American document, that we recognize the existence of our Creator as a "self-evident" truth.

I'm thankful that the framers of the U.S. Constitution gave us "the most wonderful work ever struck off at a given time by the brain and purpose of man."

I'm thankful that the Founding Fathers gave us a society in which the family is the fundamental unit, a government based on the

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separation of powers between the Federal Government and the several states, and a judicial system with trial by jury for the settling of disputes.

I'm thankful that the drafters of the Bill of Rights, in their vigilance to protect individual freedom, gave us the Second Amend ment. Right after freedom of religion, speech and press, they spelled out the safeguard that "the right of the people to keep and bear arms shall not be infringed."

I'm thankful that each American woman has the freedom of choice to select her education, her job, and the life role she wants, in or out of the home. I'm thankful to the private enterprise system which has produced so many labor-saving appliances and made the home the most pleasant working environment. I'm thankful to the men of our country who have defended .American freedom and independence in battle, but who have always exempted our women from combat duty in our na tion's nine wars.

If we want to hang on to the precious vitality that built our great nation, we must teach our young people that the password of freedom is Patrick Henry's eloquent statement, "Give me liberty or give me death" -- not the plea of the handout hunter, "Gimme, gimme, gimme." And, if we want_ our independence to endure, we must teach our young people to reject the lure of the Soviet appeasers who cry, "Rather Red than dead" -- and instead kindle the patriotic fervor of Nathan Hale, the young teacher who said, 111 only regret that I have but one life to give for my country."

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