



FREEDOM

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JANUARY 20, 2007*

WHAT WAS IT THAT BROUGHT TOGETHER THOSE MEN WHO GATHERED IN PHILADELPHIA IN 1776?

WHAT DROVE THEM TO PLACE THEIR TREASURE, THEIR HOMES, AND THEIR VERY LIVES IN THE MOST DANGEROUS OF POSITIONS?

THESE MEN FROM DISPARATE BACKGROUNDS, REGIONS, CULTURES, RELIGIOUS BELIEFS HAD IN COMMON A DESIRE FOR FREEDOM FROM THE TYRANNY OF A GOVERNANCE THAT EVINCED LITTLE CARING FOR THE NEEDS AND DESIRES OF A PEOPLE REMOTE FROM THE SEAT OF GOVERNMENT.

THOMAS PAINE STOOD WITH GENERAL WASHINGTON AS FORT WASHINGTON FELL TO THE BRITISH ARMY AND THEN LATER WROTE "THESE ARE TIMES THAT TRY MENS SOULS" AND IN THAT PAPER HE PENNED AND I QUOTE "WHAT WE OBTAIN TOO CHEAP, WE ESTEEM TOO LIGHTLY; IT IS DEARNESS ONLY THAT GIVES EVERYTHING IT'S VALUE"

-----IT IS DEARNESS ONLY THAT GIVES EVERYTHING ITS VALUE

CAN YOU IDEATE ANYTHING MORE DEAR THAN FREEDOM?

AS I STARTED TO REFLECT ON THE GAINING OF OUR FREEDOM AND THE PASSAGE OF 230 YEARS SINCE THE DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE, I

WAS HARBORING THOUGHTS ABOUT WHAT I PERCEIVED TO BE A LACK OF APPRECIATION, A LACK OF PATRIOTISM IF YOU WILL IN OUR GREAT COUNTRY. BUT THEN AS I DWELLED ON IT FOR A WHILE, IT DAWNED ON ME THAT PERHAPS WE REALLY DO STILL HAVE A SENSE OF PATRIOTISM AND THAT WE DO REMEMBER THOSE PATRIOTS WHO GAINED FREEDOM FOR US. AT LEAST SOME OF US DO.

WHEN I MEET WITH GROUPS SUCH AS YOU WHO HAVE GATHERED HERE TO CELEBRATE THE INSTALLATION OF NEW OFFICERS FOR THE CHAPTER, I KNOW THAT PATRIOTISM IS ALIVE AND WELL. THE NAME OF YOUR CHAPTER GOES TO THE VERY FOUNDATION OF OUR QUEST FOR FREEDOM AND ASSURES THAT THOSE PATRIOTS WHO FOUGHT AND PROVIDED FOR OUR FREEDOM WILL NOT BE FORGOTTEN. YOUR CHAPTER LEADS THE STATE IN FINDING THE FINAL RESTING PLACE OF THOSE PATRIOTS. YES, PATRIOTISM LIVES HERE.

PATRIOTISM MANIFESTS ITSELF WHEN WE PAY TRIBUTE TO THOSE WHO HAVE FALLEN IN THE DEFENSE OF OUR NATION; WHEN WE UNCOVER OUR HEADS AND PLACE OUR HAND OVER OUR HEARTS WHEN THE FLAG PASSES; WHEN WE SING OUR NATIONAL ANTHEM; WHEN WE EXERCISE OUR FRANCHISE TO VOTE; WHEN WE UNDERTAKE, AS YOU HAVE DONE, TO PROMOTE PATRIOTIC EXHIBITIONS THAT WILL AFFORD THE OPPORTUNITY TO OTHERS TO BROADEN THEIR PATRIOTIC EXPRESSIONS.

YES, PATRIOTISM LIVES BUT WE MUST TAKE IT UPON OURSELVES TO SEE THAT IT IS INCULCATED IN OUR YOUNG PEOPLE---BY EXAMPLE---

---BY TEACHING---AND WE MUST INSIST THAT WE AVOID CONTRIBUTING TO THE BALKANIZATION WITHIN OUR COUNTRY THROUGH USING AND PERMITTING THE USE BY THE MEDIA OF HYPHENATED DESCRIPTIONS OF OUR ANCESTRY. TEDDY ROOSEVELT SAID 100 YEARS AGO THAT THERE IS NO SUCH THING AS A HYPHENATED AMERICAN, AND I COULD NOT AGREE MORE. IF YOU ARE A NATIVE BORN AMERICAN OR A NATURALIZED AMERICAN THEN YOU ARE AN AMERICAN. YOU MAY BE PROUD OF YOUR ANCESTORS AND YOU SHOULD RECOGNIZE THAT BUT WHEN ADDRESSING THE QUESTION THE CORRECT RESPONSE IS---I AM AN AMERICAN WHOSE ANCESTORS CAME FROM-----YOU FILL IT IN.

SOMETHING I FOUND QUITE INTERESTING RECENTLY AS I WAS DOING SOME RESEARCH FOR AN ARTICLE WAS A COMMENTARY BY A RANKING MEMBER OF ONE OF THE GREAT AMERICAN INDIAN CULTURES HERE. HE SAID THAT THEY WOULD NO LONGER ACCEPT THE POLITICALLY CORRECT APPELATION OF