

S.N. July 4, 1976 A.M.
(Broadcast WAI P.M.)

3 Anthony July 3, 9 / *Revised*

BIRTHDAY OF THE NATION

Psalm 33:12

Blessed is the nation whose God is the Lord.

INTRODUCTION:

"I was born on July 4, 1776. And the Declaration of Independence is my birth certificate. The blood lines of the world run in my veins because I offered freedom to the oppressed. I am many things and many people - I am the nation."

I am over 200 million living souls - and the millions who have lived and died for me.

I am Nathan Hale and Paul Revere. I have stood at Lexington and fired the shot heard around the world. I am Washington, Jefferson, and Patrick Henry. I am John Paul Jones and Davy Crockett. I am Lee, and Grant, and Lincoln. I am the Alamo and Pearl Harbor. Where freedom called, I stood and stayed until it was over, over there. I left my dead in Flander's Field and on the slopes of Korea.

I am Brooklyn bridge, the wheat lands of Kansas, and the granite of Vermont. I am the coal fields of Virginia and Penn. The fertile land of the west - the Golden Gate and the Grand Canyon. I am Independence Hall - the Monitor and the Merrimac. I am big, I sprawl from the Atlantic Ocean to the Pacific. 3 million square miles of industry. I am more than 5 million farms. I am forest, field, and mountain, and desert. Quiet village and cities that never sleep.

You can look and see Ben Franklin walking down the streets of Philadelphia with his broad loaf under his arm. You can see Betsy Ross with her needle. You can

see the lights of Christmas.

I am Babe Ruth and the World Series. I am 169,000 schools and colleges. 250,000 churches - where my people worship God as they think best. I am a ballot dropped in a box. The roar of a crowd in a stadium. And the voice of a choir. I am an editorial in a newspaper. And a letter to a congressman. I am Eli Whitley and Stephen Foster. I am Tom Edison and Billy Graham. I am Will Rogers and the Wright Brothers. I am Daniel Webster and Jonas Saulk.

I am Longfellow and Beecher. Yes, I am the nation. And these are the things that I am. I was conceived in freedom. And God willing, in freedom I will spend the rest of my days.

May I possess all the integrity and courage, and strength to keep myself unshackled, and to be a beacon of hope for the world. This is my wish, my goal, my prayer on July 4th.

This was an (advertisement) in a Norfolk & Western Railway newspaper. And certainly it has merit concerning our country which was published back in the 1960's.

(As we celebrate Independence Day), a national holiday, by many ways - a display of flags, some fire crackers. Some remain home, some visit relatives, or attend sporting events. A few offer prayers of thanksgiving, for those who made this day possible. Those who suffered and sacrificed that we might enjoy the pursuit of liberty and happiness.

The Fourth of July is the supreme day in the nation's calendar. For on that day in 1776 the original (13 colonies) issued the Declaration of Independence. For many reasons the founding fathers resorted to this courageous action because of many abuses, a deep desire for a form of government - they (formulated) the now famous

words. "We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, and they are endowed by their creator with certain unalienable rights, that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness."

The Declaration of Independence set the colonies free and left them at liberty to build a new government - by the people and for the people.

Not without tremendous struggle did they arrive at this Constitution. And this noble document is not just the creation of some human intellect. God, in his wisdom, watched over the events in the building of this great nation.

There are two or three words that we might use in building our thoughts around the birthday of our nation. On this 200th Birthday That is old by the measurement of man. But it is mighty young for a country and a nation. And this is the birthday of our land. We could first discuss the pre-natal care. And second, delivery and birthday. And third, the health care that needs to follow.

I. PRE-NATAL CARE

Certain things took place before the birth of this nation. As before a baby is born - there are certain things that take place. And there is certain care that the mother must go through. And we discover how God made America and brought this land into being. There was certain things that happened before the earth ever took place.

Columbus discovered this new world and the first official fact - for him and his crew was to kneel upon the shores and in great reverence give thanks to Almighty God. And of course, many many (years after) that, a group of religious pioneers desired above all else to worship and have freedom of worship. And it was within their hearts to trust in God. And while they were on their way to America the pilgrims wrote, and signed The Mayflower Compact. It began with the words - "In the name of God, Amen."

These beliefs were stamped upon the passport of their minds as they came to a new nation and they were going to carve it out of this wilderness. In 1622 the Pilgrim fathers set sail, sailing the seas, and landing on the bleak shores of England, or rather New England. They fled from religious persecution and they dreamed of establishing a country that they could serve God under the guidance of their conscience. Now on this foundation, there was to be built the Christian homes. Christian schools.

The official coins of the land were to bear the words - "In God We Trust." And the first words of the Mayflower Compact read - "In the name of God, Amen." You can't start out much better than that! Now some of the other phrases were - "we, in whose names are written have undertaken for the glory of God, and for the advancement of the Christian faith, and again, we do solomonly and in the presence of God, do covenant with each other."

In our New England compact agreement we read - "we have all come into these parts of America with one and the same purpose mainly to advance the kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ."

In 1780 the Mass. Bill of Rights was written and it said - "It is the right as well as the duty of all men in society, publicly and at stated seasons, to worship the supreme being. The great creator and the preserver of this universe."

In the pre-natal days and care of this country - it was very (primitive). Will Rogers once said, "My ancestors didn't come over on the Mayflower - they put the boat." As he talked about his very humble way and upbringing in life.

Of course in (those days) there was very little specialization. As there is today. He once said of (Doctors), for instance, if there is something the matter with your (right eye) - you go to a Doctor. And he tells you, I am sorry. But I am a left-eyed doctor and I make a specialty of left eyes. Take the throat business - a doctor that

doctors on the upper part of your throat, doesn't even know where the lower part goes to it.

An old-fashioned doctor, didn't pick out a big toe or a left ear to make a living on. He picked the whole human frame. Personally, I have always felt that the best doctor in the world is the vet. He can't ask his patients what is the matter. He has got to just know.

In the early days, in the formation of this nation of ours, there was (struggle) as well as there was (strife). There were regulations that were many. As you go back to the days of the emperor of diocletian A. D. 301 - he began to regulate and he brought to an end the Roman civilization. And that marked the beginning of the dark ages. Prices and wages were controlled by the state. Violations of government orders were punished. By death. Personal freedom was limited and people ceased to work. And they did not produce a single poet, historian, or sculpture. And there were famines often. In the early days of this country when the struggle was going on, there was the matter of regulations that were being placed upon the people.

Even religion had a price tag on it - and it was a battle over 200 years ago.

1768, Fredericksburg, Va., (4 Baptist preachers) and a layman were arrested and charged with disturbing the peace. Because they refused to quit preaching.

1771, Bolling Green, Va. - (John Waller) a Baptist preacher flogged by the state while he preached.

1773, Chesterfield County, Va., John Welliford was confined to jail. He was a Baptist minister. Nine persons were converted under his preaching and were baptized under the cover of dark in the James River.

1775, Richmond, Virginia, Baptists were granted liberty to preaching to soldiers. Following appeals, as they had been active in the fight against the British.

In 1777, Charleston, S. C., Baptist patriot (Richard Farman) escaped from British soldiers who feared his prayers and talents exercised on behalf of liberty.

In 1778, Richmond, Virginia, people rejoiced when the Virginia General Assembly adopted Thomas Jefferson's act to establish freedom of religion. There was a price tag on liberty and religion over 200 years ago. And this country was in the process of coming to birth.

II. DELIVERY AND BIRTHDAY

Now let us look a little closer to the birth of this nation and the birthplace. And the wonderful thing that happened to this country. There is first the idea that the purpose of government - government has no right to exist say for the benefit of the subjects. And the powers of government has no power except the power given it by the people. "Until 1776 and the birthdate of this nation, 200 years ago - the opposite philosophy had existed. The people had no powers except what the government chose to give them. Yet this revolutionary idea that we take for granted today in our land is not practiced in the greater part of the world. More than 50% of the peoples of this world today, live in a land where the government decides what power the people can have. The people cannot decide what power the government may have. So this morning as we talk about our responsibility of citizenship, and we talk about the events of that day, July 4, 1776 - we can but help think about the foolish king and the stupid parliament of the mother country England. Heavily taxing

the people of the colonies for a war they were not participating in and had no interest in.

In 1773, Ben Franklin proposed a Congress to discuss the measures and to get their just rights and liberties, from their mother country.

In 1774 this congress convened. It was appointed to study. And the second Congress was held in 1775.

The Revolutionary War - these men were not rebels. They were not fighters against the establishment. They were loyalists. They loved their mother country. And their mother tongue. They wanted to find a way to make peace with the mother land. They wanted to have just and durable rights.

Finally in 1776, early summer, there was no reconciliation in sight, and their goals were fixed. They wanted liberty and they wanted freedom. On June 7th, Richard Henry Lee of Virginia stated, "these united colonies are and are of a right and they ought to be free and an independent state." A few days later a committee was appointed to draft a statement declaring their position of liberty and freedom. Five mention including Jefferson, Adams, Franklin, Sherman, and Livingston. The chairman was a red-headed 33 year old farmer-lawyer from Virginia - Thomas Jefferson. One week later Jefferson brought to the congress a statement. Called the Declaration of Independence. It was not original in his own terms - it was a summary of what all of these men had been thinking about and talking about for over two years.

The Congress layed it on the table for discussion. Later, they voted, independence. But again layed it on the table. They disgussed it on July 3rd. And on July 4th, 1776 the Declaration of Independence was adopted by the Congress. So there came into existence this unique document. That set forth the two basic things that are ideal in democracy and freedom. The purpose of government, that it

(existed for the people) and that the people do not exist to serve the government and the state. As in the Communists and Socialism.

2nd Second, the power of the state was (vested with the people). Hence, we get our idea of free election. The people may determine their own leadership. Their own policy. And the freedom of expression.

This historic gathering is something that ought to quicken inspiration in our minds today. John Hancock who led off with his signature - writing it so boldly that George III might be able to read it, without putting on his specks.

The old bell ringer was told to be on hand to start ringing as soon as word reached him that the Declaration had been adopted. 'They will never do it!' - he repeated again and again. Then suddenly a boy appeared - running and shouting, ring! And the event was history. We might well dedicate ourselves anew to the ideal of keeping the Liberty Bell ringing. And pause also, after singing - Faith of our Father's living still. Is it still alive in me. 57 men signed this document. And they risk everything by signing this document. As they mutually pledged together their lives, their fortunes, and their sacred honor. (If) their cause failed, they would have lost property and possessions. They stood to lose their very lives for they would have been jailed as traitors and executed. 57 men signed this Document. And significantly 47 of them were graduates of Christian colleges. It says something about their character. The average age was 44. The youngest was Livingston, 29. The chairman, 33 years old. And the oldest Ben Franklin, 70 years of age.

Where did they get this idea for freedom - where did it come from. How was it born. The real origin of our birthday was the (result) of religious teachings. The intellectual life of our forefathers centered around the meeting house of the Church. They were a people under the influence of great spiritual and moral powers.

No other theory is adequate to explain the Declaration of Independence.
The product of spiritual insight that people had gained from the Bible. It is filled with high idealism. On the worth of the individual - that a man being created in the image of God with certain rights. And man is not ashamed to be used.

This birthday and freedom was costly. Lexington, Bunker Hill, Valley Forge, Yorktown - but it brought a wonderful form of government.

Eleven years later in Philadelphia, in 1787 the Constitutional Convention was called, the representatives labored to work. And Ben Franklin, now 80 years old stood, before that convention and said. Sirs, I have lived a long time. The longer I live the more convincing proofs I see of this truth - that God governs in the affairs of men. Therefore, I move that prayers employing the assistance of Heaven and its blessing on our deliberation to be held in this assembly every morning. And from that day on, they prayed every morning for God's blessing and direction. In 100 days they produced the Constitution of the United States as God's hand came upon them. Gladstone the great Englishman said, the Constitution is the most remarkable word known to man in modern times to have been produced by the human intellect at a single stroke. There is no other explanation of our Constitution. God must have had his hand upon this infant nation. A nation under God is destined to proclaim liberty to the whole world in the future.

Four years later, the Bill of Rights was written. And the Bill of Rights has many wonderful things that help us all. First, it forbids Congress of making and establishing a state religion. That gives us religious liberty. Second, Congress is forbid from stopping people who want to express themselves freely on any subject. And Congress cannot abridge the freedom of expression in newspapers. And no soldier can be placed and quartered in your home without a due process of law.

This government forbids the taking of private property without just compensation.

How can anyone toss aside this heritage and then discredit what these noble men have achieved. This is a heritage. As we look at it, think of those men who signed the Declaration of Independence. For example, there was John Hart. From Hopewell, N. J. Who signed this because of England becoming more demanding and increasing the taxes of the colonies. Curtailing the trade - there was taxation without representation. Hart lived in this little quiet village - he was a farmer. And yet, after he signed this declaration - for his own safety, he spent a bitter winter in 1776 among the deep caves in the side of a mountain. There were some of the British troops hunting John Hart day and night. And few of his neighbors dared to bring him food. And yet, there were some neighbors who kept him in supplies. He was a Baptist. And he was a very wonderful person, according to the story. That he became a Justice of the Peace and was later sent to Congress. And a real patriot - who earned personal distinction.

On August 2, 1776, the first copies of the Declaration carried the names of John Hancock and the secretary. These two men were willing to bear full responsibility and they only could be identified with a dangerous instrument. The British destroyed barns and gardens, and woodlands of John Hart. And yet, he was a wonderful man, who suffered for the heritage.

200 years ago, as the fathers gathered in Philadelphia to sign the Declaration, many things have transpired.

In Charlottesville, at 83 years of age, Thomas Jefferson lay dying. He opened his eyes and inquired about the fire works and was told that it was the 4th. Then he asked if Adams still lived. He smiled upon hearing the affirmative and shortly thereafter, slipped away in the final sleep. On that very same day, July 4, 1826,

John Adams now 80 years old lay on his death bed. The sound of the fire works awakened him, from a coma. Struggling, he inquired if Jefferson still lived. Yes, Mr. Adams was the answer - good responded the aged Adams. And smiling, went to sleep and never awakened.

1915 July 4 - Member of S. N. B. C.

It is strange that these two men, who together had done so much to mold the nation, and yet doth join hands again across the miles on their last day on earth. And on the 50th anniversary of the historic document that they had both signed.

III. HEALTH CARE

Now we have talked about the things that took place in the creation of this nation. Second, we talked about the delivery and the birthday of the Declaration of Independence. Now, we should give just a brief note to keeping this nation healthy. This nation had a birthright and it needs to be in sound health at all times. The future depends upon to a great degree in which we refer to our text. North (America) is not great because it has more land. Because there are other nations that are larger. Or because it has more mineral treasures - there are others that out-rank us. Or because we have diamonds. Africa enjoys that place. Or because we have more people - China and India are far superior to us in the number of people. But never forget that God - the God of our forefathers - then mercy will depart from our shores.

(There) is a lot of heart break on every side of our nation today. Many years ago July was - the 4th of July was quite an occasion. It was celebrated in various ways. It was usually a parade and people went to the county fair grounds and to some spot in the town, or somewhere local where the citizens would gather. I remember reading about Thomas Marshall who was one time Vice-President of the U. S. telling about the celebration of the 4th of July in his town. He said that he could remember

the day when the American flags were waved in the ceremonies of the day. He said, he listened to the voice of a ^{Racoon} small boy "A red pepper pod in every man's eye, who won't celebrate the 4th of July." And back on the other side of the street comes a response.

Fee, fi, fo, fum,
I smell the blood of an Englishman
Dead or alive, I'll have some
Fee, fi, fo, fum.

It was the 4th of July - he said dedicated to much keeping alive the bitterness toward the British empire. On the one hand, and on the other hand, glorying in the Birthday of the Republic. He said that everybody followed the crowd in the broiling hot summer sun and listened to a prayer by a local clergyman and then the leading lawyer read the Declaration of Independence. And by that time, every body was ready to declare war anew and afresh against Great Britain. And then he said an orator of the day would stand with his Prince Albert coat down to his knees, and his white bow tie. And he said it is very questionable whether the effect or the effort to keep his necktie on occupied most of the distinguished gentleman's time. But anyhow, he said, you could hear the tramp of the pilgrim fathers march from Plymouth Rock to sign the Declaration of Independence. And of course the 4th of July has been quite a day in this nation. And it has somewhat, I imagine, to keep alive the feeling of the national heritage which we enjoy.

We must be careful of the peril of decline in this nation and know that civilizations have collapsed. And of 19 great civilizations, only three of them have been conquered by enemies. The others have collapsed from weaknesses within. Given in his history talked about the reason the Roman empire fell. The increase in divorce, loss of respect for the home, higher and higher taxes, public money was

being wasted. A mad crave for pleasure. Brutality. The nation decayed internally and I wonder if some of these signs may not be in evidence. Dr. Tom Dooley interviewing a citizen of Red China, hearing through the interpreter that the man was not free to choose, when he ate, when he went to bed, and when he went to work. The interpreter added, he does not have the freedom of when.

Now that is the thing that we must guard against to keep our nation healthy.

There are also enemies from without. The Communist Forces are fools. Russia said they will bury us - history is on our side. In 1903 Linnen started his party with 17 supporters. In 1917, he had control of his country with only 40,000 followers. The Communists today have millions of people. And they perhaps control 2/3 or more of the world's population.

Solzhenitsyn has made some major speeches in America. As he came out of Russia. The leaders of our country would not let him come to the White House. Or the President of the U. S. - it might hurt the feelings of the Soviets. Or disturb Detent. Remember that the Soviet world is out to destroy us. And that is what Linnen said, we must get religion out of everything. And that is what they set out to do. And we should not be fooled by thinking that the Communists have really stopped. And that we can just make them hold the line where they are. But in the last 5 or 10 years, they have put out of business almost every major organization that guarded us against subversion. And now they are working on the FBI and the CIA. Not that these men are perfect or without fault, or wrong-doing, but what I am suspicious of is that they are trying to tear down all the protective forces that we have to warn us.

We dethrone God in this materialistic way of life, is tragic and there is no way we can survive with it.

A man who served in Chili and in the U. S. intelligent service, talked about the

Communists regime - that there was a list of names that they planned to kill all over Chili. In the establishment of a firm hold. They wanted to end the Christian work there. And you don't read about this in the American print. You think about the way there is talk about abandoning Formosa. And there is already talk about giving away the Panama Canal. And we give it away - and we help them to buy bread and butter - and they put their money into armaments.

Think of the White House being so soft on pre-marital sex. We don't need to encourage our young people to commit evil in God's sight. Every T. V. screen, newspaper, and magazine, is giving them all the encouragement they need in that direction.

Abraham Lincoln was brought up in poverty. But he had a good mother and an even greater step-mother, and they put Christian principle and character - and he became known as honest Abe. And if any man had an excuse to lie, cheat, and steal - he did. But he had been built upon the principles and the belief that kept him on the right road. What a different philosophy prevails today. We see our government looked too for hand-outs on every hand. And many do not understand our American way of life. But equality of opportunity of the promise - after that, a man was to go on and climb the ladder. We live in a day of hand-outs - and having the government into everything. And that is exactly what our Declaration of Independence and early fore-bearers believed that in the minimum government and maximum personal freedom.

I was in the hospital visiting several years ago, and Rennie Horton was about six years old, and had his appendix removed. He was in a wheel chair coming down the hall. And he seemed to be enjoying himself. And I stopped by and said Rennie, what did the Doctor do to you? And he said, he took my independence out.

Now what we are concerned about on this birthday of our nation is, our nation's

being sound and healthy with our independence. The question is how many years beyond our 200th Birthday will we be able to go on unless we change. Unless we return to the Biblical principle of living within our means and our personal responsibility and being honest in our work. Unless the government quits meddling in every body's business, and returns freedom to individuals and business, we will be in trouble.

I mentioned Solzhenitsyn who made some speeches. He said we have helped Russia so much by our money. Building them factories, giving them patents from our offices, computers and all kinds of advantages - when they cannot even provide for their own people. They can't even feed and clothe them - and we are helping to save them and they are sending their armaments and getting ready and will be the number one military power.

Now America, instead of bargaining with anti-God and anti-Christ nations, we must give these nations the better things. 200th Birthday today, and how sad it is to hear, to read, and to see some things, that express some things in very high places. Where Jesus Christ is put out of national life. Where he is given only lip service. We have only to remember that Paris and France - during that terrible French Revolution - where social up-heaval - and there was a time when 1/2 of the children of the city of Paris were born out of wed-lock. In one year alone - 10,000 bodies of new born babies were fished from the sewers of the city. No wonder, the French revolution became blood. Men became more like beasts because they had neglected the guidelines - the God of righteousness.

We live in the luxury and the highest living standards of the world. Many people say this is the American way of life. Moses said, the power to get wealth - that he may establish a covenant - is due to the fact that thou shall remember the Lord, thy God. And the freedom which we enjoy, the political freedom, may well sweep away from us. We must keep it healthy.

In New York City, the third largest in the world, is on the brink of bankruptcy. This city is broke because it is called the fun city. It has been dancing to the tune and now it is time to pay the fiddler.

In the Kiawanis magazine in 1975, there was a note that said the attitude man stop serving and started demanding. Let's get everything for nothing. It is up to society to get me what I need. And man was taught not to make demands upon himself, and that is what John Kennedy said - ask not what your country can do for you, but ask what you can do for your country.

Finally in keeping this nation healthy on this birthday, there needs to be a new declaration of dependence. We remember the Declaration of Independence - now let us as men, women, and citizens of this great land make a declaration of dependence upon almighty God. Upon divine providence. That has guided this nation. Isaiah said, thy God reigneth. We must not take him from his throne and declare our independence of him. But we must pledge our faith, our fortunes, our honor, before him.

Psa. 33: 12

Now over 1900 years ago when the cross made possible this new declaration of dependence, Jesus Christ came into the world. And if any man be in him, he shall be free indeed. This is where true freedom can be found. This is the hopeful note for America - that a spiritual awakening will begin in our hearts and will continue throughout the nation.

God bless America - land that we love.
Stand beside her and guide her
Through the night, with a light from above.
From the mountains to the prairies
To the oceans white with foam
God bless America - my home sweet home.