

From the
Pennsylvania
Family Institute
Michael Geer,
President



The convergence of two historic events—the 250th anniversary of the Declaration of Independence and the influx of millions of athletes and visitors from around the globe for the FIFA World Cup—has presented us with a remarkable opportunity to introduce the world to America *and* to the source of our liberty, ingenuity, and abundance. Perhaps we need to reacquaint ourselves as well.

News reports, especially on social media, have been filled with videos of incredulous foreigners experiencing America and its people and communities for the first time. Some of the clips, notably the viral posts from a German visitor named Freddy, highlighted the abundance of goods we Americans often take for granted but that are largely unseen elsewhere in the world.

Some of the online reactions from others were simply expressions of awe over things like receiving free chips and salsa, hot bread with cinnamon butter, and unlimited soda refills. Or a young Japanese man in bliss over eating Texas barbecue. Watching these reactions makes me smile.

Other overseas visitors cited the friendly, shirt-off-your-back hospitality, kindness, and welcome – something they absolutely did not expect to find here in America, given what they hear in the news back home about our country and its people. [This clip, from a young Irish couple traveling through Alabama](#), is just one example of American kindness and hospitality. It has been viewed more than 1.7 million times!

Germany's Freddy, whose World Cup team suffered a heartbreaking defeat yesterday in a shootout with Paraguay, posted this about his travels through the States:



I just want to say a huge thank you to the American people who have been so welcoming to us since we arrived. 🇺🇸❤️

We've been here for over three weeks now, and we genuinely haven't met a single unfriendly person. Thank you so much. 🙏

It is posts like that one –especially the many that have highlighted the amazing freedoms and relative safety we Americans enjoy – that bring tears to my eyes. Yes, despite the struggles, trials, and failures that challenge us as a nation, America has a heart and a heritage, established at the time of our Founding 250 years ago right here in Pennsylvania. This has set us on a path of prosperity and ordered liberty under God that is the envy of the world.

That heart – those ideals—are set forth in the Declaration of Independence, which we celebrate this July 4th. You know these words:

We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness.

In a July 4, 1837, Independence Day speech, President John Quincy Adams told the gathered crowd. "Fellow citizens, the Ark of your Covenant is the Declaration of Independence" of the United States. What a remarkable image. He recognized that the Constitution tells us *how* we govern ourselves, but the Declaration tells us *why*. It declares that our rights come not from government but from God, and that government's first duty is to secure those rights. **Those truths are as essential today as they were 250 years ago.**

In that same speech, John Quincy Adams acknowledged that America's founding principles must not be taken for granted; they must be taught. By calling the Declaration "the Ark of your Covenant," he urged Americans to engrave its principles in their hearts and to teach them to their children. For

Adams, the Declaration was not a relic of the past but the moral foundation that gives meaning to the Constitution and direction to each generation.

The source of our liberty? Our Creator, the God of the Universe, who created us in His image and likeness, and thereby bestowed the right to life, infinite dignity, and worth on every human being. These truths were recognized in our founding.

It is good that we remind ourselves of this, to pray and work to achieve those ideals, and to make sure we teach them to our children and our children's children.

To our overseas visitors, thank you for reminding us of our heart and heritage, and to my fellow Americans, have a blessed and meaningful Independence Day! Happy 250!

With gratitude for our freedom,



Michael Geer
President
Pennsylvania Family Institute

P.S. Our *City on the Hill Youth Leadership and Worldview Conference* for 25 years has sought to bring a biblical worldview to the next generation, including an understanding of the source of our liberty and the need to preserve and defend it. Please pray for this year's *City on the Hill* students and our team of staff and volunteers who will be serving them for the week. And please join us on Tuesday evening, July 21, for a special *City on the Hill* event contrasting our freedoms versus the tyranny of socialism. [Details here](#).

P.P.S. Breaking news! Get expert insights from our Independence Law Center team on today's US Supreme Court ruling on [protecting girls' sports](#) – in the decision *State of West Virginia v. B.P.J.* [Details on the ILC website here](#).

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