

July 2011

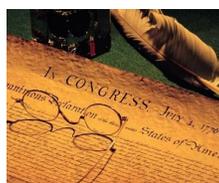
# INDEPENDENCE DAY & DEMOCRACY

**INDEPENDENCE DAY** of United States, commonly known as the Fourth of July, is the anniversary of the signing of the Declaration of Independence and the beginning of a great experiment, American democracy.

## Deklarasi Kemerdekaan Amerika Serikat

### U.S. Embassy Jakarta Mission Statement

Based on mutual respect and shared values, the U.S Mission works with Indonesia to strengthen democracy, sustain the environment, promote prosperity, enhance understanding and ensure security for our people, our nations, and our region.

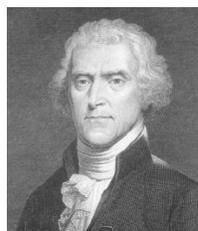


Negara dan bangsa lahir dengan ber-agam

cara. Pemberontakan militer, perselisihan antar kelompok sipil, gerakan heroisme, penghianatan, dan pertikaian-pertikaian antara penduduk rezim lama dan rezim baru merupakan peristiwa yang menandai kelahiran negara-negara baru, baik negara besar maupun kecil. Adapun kelahiran Amerika Serikat dipicu oleh semua peristiwa tersebut. Kelahiran Amerika Serikat merupakan hal yang unik, bukan hanya karena pengaruhnya yang luas terhadap sejarah dunia dan perkembangan demokrasi, tapi juga karena banyak hal dari sejarah Amerika Serikat dari masa ke masa berujung pada satu tempat, satu waktu dan satu dokumen yaitu: Deklarasi Kemerdekaan (*Declaration of Independence*).

Adalah Thomas Jefferson yang menyusun konsep *Declaration of Independence* pada bulan Juni 1776. *Declaration of Independence*

merupakan simbol kebebasan yang paling dihargai oleh bangsa Amerika dan bagi Jefferson merupakan monumen terkekal. Di dalam dokumen ini Jefferson, melalui frasa-frasa yang mulia dan tak terlupakan, mengekspresikan keyakinan yang ada dalam hati dan pikiran bangsa Amerika. Filosofi politik di *Declaration of Independence* bukan hal yang baru. Idealisme mengenai kebebasan individu sebelumnya telah dinyatakan oleh John Lock dan filsuf-filsuf dari daratan Eropa dan Jefferson menghubungkan prinsip-prinsip Locke secara langsung dengan situasi yang terjadi di koloni-koloni.



Thomas Jefferson tidak hanya memproklamirkan lahirnya Negara baru, tapi

juga memaparkan filosofi tentang kebebasan manusia yang akan menjadi kekuatan dinamis di seluruh dunia.

"Kami menyatakan kebenaran ini adalah nyata bahwa semua

manusia diciptakan sederajat, bahwa mereka dianugerahi oleh Sang Pencipta dengan hak-hak yang tidak dapat dihapuskan, di antaranya yaitu Kehidupan, Kebebasan, dan mengejar Kebahagiaan. Bahwa untuk mendapatkan hak-hak ini, — Pemerintah dibentuk dari Rakyat, memperoleh kekuasaan mereka dari persetujuan mereka yang diperintah, — Bahwa kapan pun Bentuk Pemerintahan menghancurkan tujuan itu, masyarakat berhak untuk mengganti atau menghapuskannya dan membentuk Pemerintahan baru, meletakkan landasan pada prinsip-prinsip semacam itu dan mengatur kekuatannya sedemikian rupa yang akan sangat memengaruhi Keselamatan Kebahagiaan mereka." (Paragraf 2, Deklarasi Kemerdekaan A.S., 4 Juli 1776).

Naskah lengkap *Declaration of Independence* bisa diakses di: <http://goo.gl/TB1n>.

Baca sejarah Kemerdekaan Amerika Serikat dalam ebook "Outline of the U.S History" di: <http://goo.gl/STVN2>

### Inside this issue:

- Deklarasi Kemerdekaan Amerika Serikat 1
- The Root Principles of Democracy 2
- Americans Celebrating 4th of July 3
- More Resources on Independence Day, Democracy and U.S. History 4

*This information package is compiled by the IRC to celebrate the 235th American Independence Day on July 4, 2011.*

## The Root Principles of Democracy

By Melvin I. Urofsky

Democracy is hard, perhaps the most complex and difficult of all forms of government. It is filled with tensions and contradictions, and requires that its members labor diligently to make it work. Democracy is not designed for efficiency, but for accountability; a democratic government may not be able to act as quickly as a dictatorship, but once committed to a course of action it can draw upon deep wellsprings of popular support. Democracy, certainly in its American form, is never a finished product, but is always evolving. The outer forms of government in the United States have altered little in two centuries, but once we look past the surface we discover great changes. Yet, most Americans believe -- and rightly so -- that the basic principles underlying their government derive directly from notions first enunciated by the framers of the Constitution in 1787.

...No one claims that the American model, as successful as it has been for the United States, is the model that all democracies should follow. Each nation must fashion a government out of its own culture and history. Although, there are 11 principles identified as the keys to understand how democracy has evolved and how it operates in the United States:

### Constitutionalism

... Constitution is a law, but at the same time it is much more than that. It is the organic document of a government, laying out the powers of the different branches as well as the limits on governmental authority. . . .

### Democratic Elections

No matter how well designed

a government is, it cannot be considered democratic unless the officials who head that government are freely elected by the citizens in a manner perceived to be open and fair to all. . . .

### Federalism, State and Local Governments:

The United States is unique in its federal system of government, in which power and authority are shared and exercised by national, state, and local governments. . . .

### Creation of law

... In the United States, law is made at many levels, from local town councils, on up through state legislatures, to the U.S. Congress. But at all these levels, there is a large input from the citizenry, either directly or indirectly. The key to democratic law-making is not the mechanism or even the forum in which it takes place, but the sense of accountability to the citizenry and the need to recognize the wishes of the people. . . .

### An independent judiciary

... Courts can be very powerful in a democracy, and in many ways are the operating arm through which constitutional constraints are interpreted and enforced. The greatest defender of individual rights in the United States has been the court system; this is made possible because most judges have life tenure and can focus on legal issues without the distraction of politics. . . .

### Powers of the presidency

... In a democracy, a president must rule through his or her political skills, establishing a framework of cooperation with the legislature and above all with the people. At the same time, the citizenry must feel secure that constitutional constraints ensure that the president or prime minister is always the servant, and not the master, of the people. . . .

### Role of a free media

Closely tied to the public's right to know are a free media that can investigate the workings of government and report on them without fear of prosecution. In a democracy, the people rely on the press to ferret out corruption, to expose the maladministration of justice or the inefficient and ineffective workings of a government body. . . .

### Role of interest groups

... Now there are many issues that voters need to speak about, and in order to make their voices heard on specific matters, citizens create lobby groups, groups advocating public and private interests, and non-governmental organizations devoted to single issues. . . .

### Public's right to know

... In a democracy, government should, as much as possible, be transparent -- that is, its deliberations and decisions should be open to public scrutiny. . . .

### Protecting minority rights

If by "democracy" we mean rule by the majority, then one of the great problems in a democracy is how minorities are treated. By "minorities" we do not mean people who voted against the winning party, but rather those who are indelibly different from the majority by reasons of race, religion, or ethnicity. . . .

### Civilian control of the military

... In a democracy, the military must not only be under the actual control of civilian authorities, but it must have a culture that emphasizes the role of soldiers as the servants and not the rulers of society. This is easier to accomplish when there is a citizen army,

whose officers come from all sectors of society and after a term of service, return to civilian life. But the principle remains the same: The military must always be subordinate; its job is to protect democracy and not rule. . . .

From above points we can derive certain overarching themes. First, and most important, is that in a democracy the ultimate source of all authority is the people. The Constitution of the United States announces this boldly in its first words: "We, the People of the United States . . . do ordain and establish this Constitution." All powers in government must come from the people, and must be accepted by them as legitimate. . . .

A second general principle is that there must be a division of powers so that no one part of the government can become so strong as to subvert the will of the people. Although the president is always seen as the most powerful office in American government, the Constitution limits those powers and requires the chief executive to work in harmony with the other branches as well as with the constituency of voters. Although civilian control of the military would seem to place great power in the president's hands, the culture underlying the military in a democratic society works against the misuse of that force. Courts also exist to serve as limitations not only on the executive but on the legislative branch as well. In a democracy, government must be in a balance, and all the different parts must appreciate the wisdom and necessity of that balance.

Continue to page 4

## Americans Celebrating 4th of July

*"I am apt to believe that it (U.S Independence Day) will be celebrated, by succeeding generations, as the great anniversary festival... It ought to be solemnized with pomp and parade, with shows, games, sports, guns, bells, bonfires, and illuminations, from one end of this continent to the other, from this time forward forever more." (John Adams letter to his wife Abigail date July 3, 1776).*

July 4th has been recognized as Independence Day in the United States ever since the country's Founding Fathers signed the Declaration of Independence on July 4, 1776.

This year, it's estimated that there will be 311.7 million Americans observing 4th of July. Photos gallery below tells stories on how Americans usually celebrate their Independence Day.



Washington DC is a spectacular place to celebrate July 4th! The National Mall, with Washington DC's monuments and the U. S. Capitol in the background, forms a beautiful and patriotic backdrop to America's Independence Day celebrations. This is an all-day event in the nation's capital, beginning with a parade along Constitution Avenue and ending with a spectacular display of

fireworks over the Washington Monument.

**Quick fact:** In 2010, the value of imported fireworks for Independence Day reached \$197.3 million. As much as \$190.7 million was from China.



Hundreds of people turn out to watch the annual Fourth of July parade by the sight of a horse-drawn wagon, symbolizing the pioneer history of the Old West of Capitan, New Mexico.



Music always has played a prominent role in U.S. Independence Day celebrations. Each year, members of the U.S. Army Field Band play with the Boston Pops Orchestra at an outdoor Fourth of July show along the Charles River in Boston. Music of all sorts pop, rock, hip-hop, country, blues, folk and classical is performed at outdoor concerts all across the United States on Independence Day.



U.S. beaches typically attract large crowds of holiday revelers throughout the long Independence Day weekend.



Members of the East Greenwich, Rhode Island, Kentish Guards perform during the Bristol, Rhode Island, Independence Day parade. It is the oldest Fourth of July parade in the country, and these fife players are wearing period costumes that recall Rhode Island's status as one of the original 13 states of the Revolutionary War era.



Friends and relatives gather for a picnic lunch at McClellanville, South Carolina. Like all outdoor meals, Independence Day picnics are relaxed, informal affairs, and they typically feature popular summer dishes such as barbecued meat, potato salad and corn-on-the-cob.

81 million number of Americans who said they have taken part in a barbecue during the previous year.



Gleeful youngsters head for the finish line during a sack race at

Lake Conrary in St. Joseph, Missouri. The race is just one of many children's events at the annual "Fourth at the Lake" celebration.



A six-year-old competitor looks up at the crowd as she eats a portion of cherry pie during a pie-eating contest in Grand Rapids, Nebraska.



Fireworks reflect off the granite wall of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial, a revered landmark in Washington.

### Sources:

A Capitol Fourth from PBS

<http://goo.gl/myiVX>

IIP Digital at

<http://goo.gl/2tEPd>

A Tradition of Celebration

by the Adams Family

<http://goo.gl/OkNrf>

Facts for Feature: 4th of July

<http://goo.gl/NN2kj>

### Related sources:

America.gov: Fireworks and

Family at [http://](http://goo.gl/4NKG5)

[goo.gl/4NKG5](http://goo.gl/4NKG5)

Fourth of July is Independence

Day at <http://goo.gl/PQ2w>

Contact Info:  
Information Resource Center  
Public Affairs Section  
U.S. Embassy Jakarta

Address:  
Jl. Medan Merdeka Selatan 4-5,  
Jakarta 10110, Indonesia  
Tel.: (021) 350-8467  
Fax.: (021) 350-8466  
Email: ircjakarta@state.gov

Website:  
<http://jakarta.usembassy.gov/irc.html>

Walk-in Visitors  
(by appointment only): Monday to Friday;  
from 07:30 to 16:00  
Closed on U.S. and Indonesian holidays

The U.S. Embassy's Information Resource Center (IRC) in Jakarta is a specialized reference and research facility. Our goal is to provide you with accurate, up-to-date and authoritative information about U.S. society and policy materials, cover such topic as U.S. foreign policy, government, economics and trade, history, social and cultural issues.

The IRC collection includes an up-to-date reference collection, a periodicals section, and access to extensive online databases.

For details on reference and periodical collections, please check our online catalog at <http://69.63.217.22/U10086Staff/OPAC/index.asp>.

For all IRC information products, including this info package are available online at: <http://jakarta.usembassy.gov/infoproduct.html>

Information queries may be submitted to us by phone, fax, mail, and e-mail. You are also welcome to visit us by appointment for personal research assistance.

## The Root Principles of Democracy

*Continued from page 2*

must appreciate the wisdom and necessity of that balance.

Third, the rights of individuals and of minorities must be respected, and the majority may not use its power to deprive any person of basic liberties. In a democracy this may often be difficult, especially if there is a diverse

population holding diverse views on critical subjects. But once a government deprives one group of rights, then the rights of all the people are in jeopardy.

... But can these principles be translated into other cultures? There is no simple answer, because the success of any governmental system depends on so many inter-

twined features.

... Other nations as they experiment with democracy -- and it is always an experiment -- will need to examine how the attributes described above can best be created and sustained in their own culture. There is no one way; to paraphrase the poet Walt Whitman, democracy is a multitude, often contradicting

itself. But if we keep our eye on the basic, immutable principles -- that ultimate authority resides in the people, that governmental powers must be limited, and that individual rights must be protected--then there can be many ways in which to achieve those goals.

Read complete version at: <http://goo.gl/c5S0K>

## More Resources on Independence Day, Democracy and U.S. History

### Books (available in IRC Collection)

**Celebrate Independence Day** / Deborah Heiligman  
Publisher: National Geographic, 2007. ISBN: 9781426300752

**The Fourth of July Encyclopedia** / James R. Heintze.  
Publisher: McFarland & Co., 2007. ISBN: 9780786427772

**Our Secret Constitution : How Lincoln Redefined**

**American Democracy** / George P. Fletcher.  
Publisher: Oxford University Press, c2001. ISBN: 0195141423

**ePublications**  
**Historians on America**  
Link: <http://goo.gl/d5NCB>

**Outline of U.S. History**  
Link: <http://goo.gl/sTVN2>

**U.S. History in Brief**  
Link: <http://goo.gl/KYGIB>

**Multimedia**  
**Music-Patriotic Melodies**  
Sounds recording and music sheets from Library of Congress collection. Link: <http://goo.gl/Eh4Yq>

**Video-American Life: A Heritage of Celebrating Independence**  
Link: <http://goo.gl/gRmn3>

**Video-Declaration of Independence**  
To many in the Continental Congress, war was unthink-

able. Link: <http://goo.gl/QfKmv>

**Video-Fourth of July History**  
Discover how and when Americans celebrated Independence Day in the past. Link: <http://goo.gl/jyUnH>

**Web Pages**  
**Guiding Principles of U.S. Democracy** Link: <http://goo.gl/cbWgr>

**The Core Democratic Value**  
Link: <http://goo.gl/atN6A>

*Disclaimer: Books, articles, reports and websites described in this info package present a diversity of views in order to keep our users to keep abreast of current issues in the United States in particular and worldwide in general. These items represented the views and opinions of the authors and do not necessary reflect official U.S. Government policy.*