



Americanism:

Its Meaning and Its Keeping



These remarks from the President of the United States were compiled by the White House at a special Fourth of July message for exclusive release today to readers of Family Weekly.

IN OUR FOURTH of July speeches, we say America seeks no dominion over others, that she believes in the dignity of man. We say these things, and we believe them, for they are true.

But an American can scarcely consider that he is doing his full duty to his country unless he shows this belief in Americanism, and realizes that he is showing himself to others as one of the products of this system. As an American, you are set apart from all other individuals.

First, you must know what Americanism really is. You have got to know that here we have a government of, by, and for free men, and one based solidly on religious concepts.

You also must know something of the history of your country, how we came to be what we are. You have got to believe with all your soul that it is a system that will allow people to reach the greatest degree of earthly happiness of which we are capable, that we can seek to express ourselves, to realize all that is within us.

In our own land, it is largely through the family that our national character is formed. Americans love fair play, bravery, and hard work; they believe in human brotherhood because American fathers and mothers—by precept and example—teach these virtues to their children. So long as these ennobling qualities are passed from generation to generation, our nation will remain strong and secure and great.

Faced with this fact, it is imperative that our Government never rest in its task of serving the American home. In every way possible, we must keep our families spiritually rich, strong, and free.

To this end, many groups—health, educational, welfare, religious, and Governmental—must work together to supplement the efforts of the family itself. This work to strengthen the American home is not sheer humanitarianism on the part of these groups; it is an investment in the national well-being.

America seeks peace. But unless peace is taught in the home by the mother, during that age where everything that is learned and absorbed stays with us so strongly, there is going to be no peace. This is the foundation on which the men and women of our nation can build an abiding happiness for themselves and their children.

Without God, of course, there could be no American form of government, nor any American way of life. Recognition of the Supreme Being is the first and most basic expression of Americanism. Thus the Founding Fathers saw it, and thus, with God's help, it will continue to be.

The path America travels this Independence Day is narrow, long, and beset with many dangers. Each day we must ask that Almighty God will set and keep His protecting hand over us so that we may pass on to those who come after us the heritage of a free people, secure in their God-given rights and in full control of a Government dedicated to the preservation of those rights.

Dwight D. Eisenhower

President of the United States