

# INTERDEPENDENCE DAY

The proud observance of July 4 is enriched by our growing awareness of the extent to our dependence on one another, as individuals and as a group. The other big current jawbreaker, globalization, reinforces our mutual need for one another. This is not a new phenomenon, but the news of the day drives it home forcefully in ways not quite so urgent for prior generations. It has come as almost a shock, to many, that we as a nation are not self-sufficient in the matter of fuel. Two huge competing customers, China and India are suddenly in the picture, for example. Besides, the link between fuel and food has grown more crucial as populations grow along with expectations of more and better nutrition around the world, but most particularly now that the same substance, corn, serves as both fuel and food. The added incentive to cut down on air pollution only exacerbates this note of competition, with no easy solution in sight. (Our tendency to see billionaires cleaning up on all this gives us that familiar helpless feeling...) We pretty clearly, as a nation, cannot quite go it alone in the style to which we have grown accustomed.

The positive side to all this is that we have so much to offer to so many nations including ourselves, and we fulfill our national destiny in so doing. Our research establishment can contribute mightily to the fuel/food challenge; and the best of our entrepreneurs can do us all proud as they turn to the challenge.

Another form of group interdependence is in the arts and ideas. No one nation in history has had a monopoly on beauty, or on depth of thought. Geographic borders and political rivalries have little to do with the depth of philosophy or the inspiration of artistic genius. We have eagerly shared, in both directions, in the global traffic of philosophy and the arts.

It comes home forcefully to the individual person that our interdependence on one another grows with the passing years. Education at all levels is a testimony to this. Unless we try for a sweeping revision of the Creator's plan, we learn in groups and have a rewarding time sharing from one generation to another. This process has in our time especially extended throughout life.

We have a huge and urgent agenda nationally. In addition to the above dilemma, we

note that a large fraction (some say 50%) of children don't have both parents on the scene. Our mutual reliance on one another is certainly not optional; but the best traditions of July 4th will help us to enhance the qualities of independence and, pardon the jawbreaker, interdependence.

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