

Have We Redefined America on Her Birthday?

“Is it the Fourth?” Those were the last words recorded of Thomas Jefferson. He had authored the Declaration of Independence exactly fifty years before he took his last breath. He died on July 4, 1826. That same day, his great rival and dear friend, John Adams, died five hundred sixty-two miles to the North. Adams’ last words were: “Thomas Jefferson still survives.” Do those self-evident truths of which Jefferson wrote so eloquently in the Declaration mean anything today? Following last month’s Supreme Court rulings, do *any* words mean anything today? “I have never had a political idea that did not come from the Declaration of Independence,” said Abraham Lincoln as he raised the American flag over Independence Hall in Philadelphia on February 22, 1861. And he added in an uncharacteristically emotional tone for him: He would rather be assassinated where he stood than surrender any portion of that great Declaration – or a single star of that Union’s flag. What are some of those ideas for which generations of Americans died and would die? First, we are *created* equal. Male and female, black, white, Hispanic, Asian, we are all created equal. Created, so it says, not just born equal. Created implies and the text tells us we have a Creator. The atheizers of today are seeking to erase any reference to God from the public square. Second, we are not only equal, but endowed by our very Creator with our rights. Our right to life is inalienable. The Supreme Court in 1973 denied this. And it has denied it every day for four decades. Just as the high court denied the Declaration’s self-evident truths in its infamous *Dred Scott* ruling of 1857, so did the majority of justices in their odious *Roe v. Wade* ruling of 1973. Under that cruel and unjust exercise in “raw judicial power,” fifty-seven million innocents have been slaughtered. “Ultra-sound has made it impossible to deny that that thing in

the womb is a human being," writes liberal columnist Joe Klein in *Time* magazine. But liberalism is based on denying that truth. It lives for that lie. As bad as *Roe's* unleashing of homicidal violence against the most defenseless among us was the Supreme Court's absurd conclusion in the 1992 case of *Planned Parenthood v. Casey* equals it. In *Casey*, Justice Tony Kennedy strained to give us philosophy, profundity, wisdom. Instead, he gave us this: "At the heart of liberty is the right to define one's own concept of existence, of meaning, of the universe, and of the mystery of human life." Moving from overturning the homicide laws of all fifty states and removing protection of the law from unborn children, there really is no limit to what this Court might do. Eight hundred years ago, Magna Carta was signed in England. It limited the power of the king for the first time. It is from Magna Carta, and not from some French atheist of the eighteenth century, that we derive our idea of legally binding the government to respect human rights. Last month, that same high court, unbound the government. Marriage is no longer marriage. Their marriage proposal is to end marriage in America. Every argument for men "marrying" men is an argument for three men "marrying" or three women "marrying." This same court ruled that in construing a law, the words of the law approved by Congress and signed by the President no longer have a fixed meaning. They can be – in fact they must be – *revised*. The words must be made to unsay what they said. And to say what none thought they said. Such a court is accountable to none; it is unchecked and unbalanced; as such, it is subject only to its own vaguest notions of what "a living Constitution" allows. So, "Is it the Fourth?" is still a good question. Does our nation still hold these truths? Are we still a free people? When Jefferson drafted those words two hundred thirty-nine years ago, he struck out the word *Subjects* and inserted the word *Citizens*. It was the first time Americans saw themselves as Citizens. Citizens govern themselves. Subjects must obey mandates. From arrogant bureaucrats. From unelected renegade judges. How should we view the Declaration of Independence and

the Constitution? How do they complement one another? Lincoln provided an answer. "A word fitly spoken is like apples of gold in pictures [frames] of silver," he noted. He drew from Scripture. (Proverbs 25:11). The Declaration of Independence is our apple of gold. The Constitution is its frame. Torn asunder, neither can long endure. Ours is the task of reunion. Is it the Fourth? *Reprinted from the **Family Research Council**.*