

Fourth of July Masonic Minute

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This month is when we celebrate the 247th year of our Independence, where we take a moment and reflect on what has become the longest-standing democratic republic in world history. So, how has this experiment of ours lasted so long? How has our rebellion advanced to become the most powerful nation in the world at present? Many of the founding principles that have led to our success can be paralleled in what Masonry shows us to be right and good.

Many of the "great societies" in history revolved around a central figure, dictator, king, queen, etc. Their rule was about power, submission, and control. They stifled their people and rendered them powerless unless the ruler saw fit to bring them into their sphere of influence.

Our nation's Founding Fathers, however, saw things differently. Through the Age of Enlightenment, which also ushered Freemasonry into the spotlight, they saw the potential in humans. They believed that the government should exist only to set the stage for human flourishing and that it was there to serve the people, not the other way around. The Founders valued freedom

and the need to protect its citizenry's Life, Liberty, and the Pursuit of Happiness. It was under this framework that Americans flourished. The innovation, development, and flourishing that has emanated from these shores since our founding is virtually unprecedented. We thrive because of the freedoms offered through our system of government.

Those freedoms, however, come with expectations. In order to keep our government from becoming an oppressive and controlling apparatus, it relies on its citizens to police themselves to some degree. We must agree to live by a basic moral framework, contribute to society, strive to better ourselves, and respect the same freedoms we expect from others. When we do this, we all grow and thrive. When we are selfish, do not respect others' Lives, Liberty, and Pursuit, and expect society to provide for us instead of providing for ourselves, our society begins to crumble.

Masonry is still relevant. Under its exuberance in following the Great Light and its subsequent moral framework, Masonry teaches us how best to act to allow the American experiment to thrive. It demands that we live by the Square and Compasses, through the plumb, and by the level. Those basic things keep our society humming along; losing them leads to our demise.

Brethren, it is imperative that we find ways to engage with the younger generations and export these principles to them. They must understand that for America to continue to thrive, we must act in a way that prevents our government from being compelled to police us. By preserving Masonry, we

preserve America! Let us be the example, as many of our Brethren, who were part of our founding, were in our nation's infancy; Happy Birthday to this great nation and the government that was created and fostered the best of the human race.