

## Independence Day

4 July, 2021

As many of you know and may well be tired of hearing me say, I'm not a big flag waver. Point of fact, I'm not much of a joiner, regardless the context. So when faced with friends' assertions that I 'ought to' join or get involved with this coalition or that interest group, I'm usually a no-show. This does not mean I don't care about the issue at hand, any more than the lack of a flag in front of my house today identifies me as un-American. I just don't voluntarily identify with stances or movements that may not represent my own beliefs. And in the case of the flag, its use at recent events have muddied – perhaps sullied is a better word – the symbolism it represents. And yes, we could argue about that. I just choose not to.

I hold my own beliefs dearly and they migrate with the times as I learn more, see more, think more. So, no, I would not today take many of the stances I took in those long-ago arguments with Pat and Bill and Sally and Anne. Doesn't mean I've deserted anyone; just means I've changed over time. Resurrect my Dad and he'd probably be shocked and mildly offended by some of my current positions. My Mom would be more likely to be relieved that I've finally 'come around.' Who's right? Who's to say?

The thing is, we're all probably right some and wrong some and that's okay. Just as was the case with my parents, you build your belief system where you are, when you are, with the information then at hand.

I don't know where I'll be ten years hence. But in today's where/when, I hope each and all of you are well, safe and reasonably happy. That you'll vote in the next election and do so based on clear-eyed assessment of the candidates as measured against your own core values. I hope and believe those of you who read my posts will always put the rights and needs of children first and foremost. And that you'll seize on opportunities to pay it forward.

Oh, and that those of you who will shoot off fireworks (Really? Must you?) will stop at a decent hour and let my poor dogs sleep in peace. Hmmph!

Happy Independence Day!