

Team Ten,

Tuesday, our Nation celebrates our 241st birthday. In the hot, humid, and humble Pennsylvania State House, now known to us as Independence Hall in Philadelphia, our Founders labored, discussed and finally concurred on the document long-called the Declaration of Independence. The opening lines are quite familiar, and read ... "When in the Course of human events it becomes necessary for one people to dissolve the political bands which have connected them with another and to assume among the powers of the earth, the separate and equal station to which the Laws of Nature and of Nature's God entitle them, a decent respect to the opinions of mankind requires that they should declare the causes which impel them to the separation. We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness."

Future first Vice President, and our second President, John Adams, became the first to affix his signature to that seminal founding and foundational document. During the weeks following the Declaration's adoption, 56 delegates would eventually sign the document. It is believed as many as eight delegates never signed the document, but only one, John Dickinson, refused to sign, thinking it premature to endorse until more negotiation with England was completed. Regardless of the actual date of first signature, or who did or didn't eventually affix their signature, our Declaration would become what some scholars, and also President Abraham Lincoln, refer to as "the Golden Apple" around which our Constitution would later become the "Silver Frame".

During my younger years, our Nation celebrated our Bicentennial Birthday. I recall, even at that age, there was a concerted National effort to capture, or really recapture, the "Spirit of '76". It was a time of reflection, appreciation, and National pride for the Freedoms we all hold dear. Yesterday, we witnessed much of that same spirit as our Nation's sons and daughters arrived, starting their journey towards becoming leaders in our Air Force. This morning, we experienced the marvelous moment when 1,215 future leaders took the oath each military member has also so sworn. Watching all of the I-Day events, and knowing how incredibly hard you have been working to ensure success, coupled with seeing the incoming determination, drive, and devotion of the Class of 2021, recaptures, at least for me, much of the "Spirit of '76".

THANK YOU for your service, selflessness, and support to the 10th Air Base Wing, our United States Air Force Academy, the United States Air Force and, ultimately, to the securing of our Freedoms.

You are inspiring ... enjoy this long weekend with family and friends, and know you are making a difference each and every day!

With deep thankfulness,

swc

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Team Ten ... Forging the Future!