**What Is Americanism?**

Republican Women know that Americanism is more than respectfully reciting the Pledge of Allegiance and honoring the American flag.

*Webster’s Seventh New Collegiate Dictionary* offers several definitions of Americanism, the first of which is, “a characteristic feature of American English esp. as contrasted with British English”. John Witherspoon, signer of the Declaration of Independence and president of what later became Princeton University, is credited with coining the term in reference to distinctly American words and phrases. What has since that time come to be thought of as Americanism has been related more to a sense of patriotism and ideals that are uniquely American. Additional definitions of the term found in *Webster’s* reflect this second meaning: “attachment or allegiance to the traditions, interests or ideals of the U.S.” and “the political principles and practices essential to American national culture”.

Several of our country’s Republican Presidents during the last century offered their own instructive explanations and descriptions of Americanism. For example:

**Theodore Roosevelt** – *“Americanism is a question of principle, of purpose, of idealism, of character.”*

*“Americanism means the virtues of courage, honor, justice, truth, sincerity, and hardihood – the virtues that made America.”*

*“There can be no fifty-fifty Americanism in this country. There is room here for only 100% Americanism, only for those who are Americans and nothing else.”*

**Calvin Coolidge** – *“We have been, and propose to be, more and more American. We believe that we can best serve our own country and most successfully discharge our obligations to humanity by continuing to be openly and candidly, intensely and scrupulously, American.”*

**Dwight Eisenhower** *– “Without God there could be no American form of government nor an American way of life. Recognition of the Supreme Being is the first, the most basic, expression of Americanism.”*

**Herbert Hoover** gave us this candid insight [with a slight modification inserted, so as to render the wording somewhat less colorful than the original] – *“I don’t know much about Americanism, but it’s a [doggone] good word with which to carry an election.”*

Unlike Herbert Hoover (or our current Chief Executive), our soon-to-be Republican President, **Donald Trump**, seems to have a good understanding of what Americanism means. At the Republican National Convention last July, he drew cheers when he said, *“Americanism, not globalism will be our credo.”* He did carry the election, gaining the victory by speaking plainly and unapologetically about America’s greatness, about the patriotism, character, and values that have defined and distinguished our country and its people.

A renewed sense of, and commitment to, Americanism can make this nation great again.

Priscilla Poese, AzFRW Americanism