

Equine Independence

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by Jerry Finch



If my horse were to give an Independence Day Speech before Congress, this is what he would say:

I do not know why you have asked me to speak here today, nor do I understand what object you have asked me to represent in the celebration of your Independence Day. You celebrate freedom and justice, reflected in your Declaration of Independence, but that paper does not apply to me, or to any other animal that shares this earth with you.

For your sake, I am pleased that you have reached such high levels of freedom. Would that sole document reflect your outlook for horses as for humans, I would be first to celebrate with you. Sadly, such is not the case, for horses are not included, nor are the safeties and securities granted to you held in common with those of us who have helped you build this great nation. This Fourth of July is yours, not mine. As you celebrate, I must mourn for the loss of millions of my kind to your lust for power and money.

To halter me, tie a lead rope on me and pull me into this magnificent hall to speak of your freedom is once again a sample of your inhumane treatment and a mockery to the justice of which you are so proud. You, who have thrown the bodies of dead horses in stacks that reach to the heavens, ask one of us to tell you of the glories of America? I think not.

For it is not your joy I hear, nor the fireworks booming in the skies. I hear the cry of millions of my kind, tied in backyards, stuck in dark, wet stalls, left unfed and unloved. I hear the plaintive moan of those being trucked thousands of miles to face a horrible death at your hands. As I look out at you, I see them and what you have allowed to happen to them in your name.

On your Independence Day, the future of my kind looks far darker than ever before. Far worse than the conduct of those who occupied these seats in the years before you came, those of you who presently sit within this majestic hall now conduct yourselves with an arrogance that is both revolting and hideous. You have tied yourselves to the pockets of those who profit from the suffering of my kind, you make false statements on their behalf and refuse to represent those constituents whose vote brought you into this once hollowed hall of honor.

I do not stand before you as the honored guest, representing the triumphant battles for freedom I fought with you. I do not stand as your partner in memory of or great history together as we conquered nations, fought our way to the west, plowed fields and fed millions with our combined

labor. I will not, for I now know, as do those citizens who call me their friends, what you truly think of my kind. You who occupy these seats have trampled upon the Constitution for the right to pocket pieces of gold. You refuse to represent the horses of this nation when we turned to you. You have made fun, ridiculed and ignored those citizens you represent as they have pleaded our case before you, and for that I can say nothing positive about you, the system you represent or the freedoms you allegedly vowed to protect.

Do I need to stand before you and argue that the slaughter of horses is wrong? That point is past. It is conceded and acknowledged in private and only disputed in public by the repetitious lies of those who profit from your murderous ways. Do I need to show you the truth behind the lies? They are known and open for you, if you are of the mind to look beyond the hands of those who give you money for your next reelection effort. Do I need to tell you of those citizens whom you allegedly represent who want you to stop the slaughter? Look at your call logs, your emails, your fax machines.

Am I to tell you that it is wrong to have us stolen from our loved humans, to be beaten with sticks, shocked, transported without rest or water, shoved into kill chutes, terrorized and injured by captive bolts or guns, hung by our legs while we are still alive and sold by the pound when we are dead? There is not a man among you who would suffer to the point of death as we do, yet you deny us the right to be free from this horror.

What then is your argument, that you have a divine right to our death? That your interpretation of dominion gives you a reason to kill us for the dollars it places in your pockets? Is that indeed your concept of God's will? If that is your God, then those humans who love us are not a part of your world.

Those days of intellectual debates are a thing of the past. You do not need to hear the arguments, nor do you need to see the light. Instead, you will feel the thunder, stand in the storm and be burned by the firestorm you created, for those humans that support our freedom are aroused and your hypocrisy toward the honor of your Constitution will bring your downfall.

Do not ask me to celebrate with you, for I am not free. I am your slave, to be destroyed at your whim. Only when you grant the right of the American people to turn their beliefs into laws that stop the insane practice of horse slaughter will I be able to stand before you in honor.

