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News Release

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IMMEDIATE RELEASE

SECRETARY OF DEFENSE RUMSFELD HONORS LIBERTY DAY

To recognize Liberty Day, Secretary of Defense Donald H. Rumsfeld today issued a compilation of key U.S. documents -- the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution -- for use by servicemembers and employees of the Department of Defense. This collection also includes excerpts from significant legislation calling for exemplary conduct by all military leaders and avoidance of fraud, waste and abuse of authority within the Department.

In his statement, Rumsfeld indicated the document is to encourage all who serve in the Department of Defense to examine these words "which together form the basis for our freedom and prosperity."

The Secretary expressed his hope this compilation will serve as a constant reminder of the sacred oath required by Congress for every individual elected or appointed to office in the civil or uniformed services:

"that I will support and defend the Constitution of the United States against all enemies, foreign and domestic; that I will bear true faith and allegiance to the same; that I take this obligation freely, without any mental reservation or purpose of evasion; and that I will well and faithfully discharge the duties of the office on which I am about to enter. So help me God."

Rumsfeld's Liberty Day proclamation and the combined Declaration of Independence/U.S. Constitution document are on the worldwide web at <http://www.defenselink.mil/pubs/liberty.pdf>.

The U.S. Congress designated March 16 as Liberty Day, the birthday of James Madison, fourth president of the United States. According to the October 2000 Congressional Joint Resolution, Madison was the major author of the Virginia Plan, "model and the basis for that United States Constitution that emerged from the Constitutional Convention in 1787."
