

## Personal Freedoms – Keep the Promise

By Marvin Pirila

What happened to our liberties and freedoms, as so strongly defended in the words of U.S. Declaration of Independence? We have allowed our government to slowly and methodically scale down individual rights promised by the very charter that founded our country. The demise of our once great country is resting fully upon these very liberties. The aura of defeat and hopelessness now fill American air, whereas freedom, the American dream, and hope used to reign. Oppression kills innovation, creativity, ambition, hope, and the spirit of the truly free.

All of us have heard the great words spelled out in the Declaration of Independence, but when was the last time we pondered its great significance. Nothing is more powerful than the passage: *“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 --- That to secure these Rights, Governments are instituted among Men, deriving their just Powers from the Consent of the Governed, that whenever any Form of Government becomes destructive of these Ends, it is the Right of the People to alter or abolish it, and to institute a new Government, laying its Foundations on such Principles, and organizing its Powers in such Form, as to them shall seem most likely to effect their Safety and Happiness.”*

In addition to the Democratic and Republican parties, others such as the Independent Party should get equal air time. Barring them from major debates is nothing short of suppressing the voices of many Americans. It’s time for other voices in politics.

Quit making political campaigns about money, and more about issues. Provide equal air time for each candidate winning the primary elections for their parties. The government should pay an equal amount to each party and restrict all additional monies from being paid to any campaign. The campaigns could add as many non-paid volunteers as they wished.

The original American system boosted the ideals of self and unleashed the potential of human creativity. As Jefferson said, *“Enlighten the people generally, and tyranny and oppressions of body & mind will vanish like evil spirits at the dawn of day.”*

Today’s American system has evolved into one of countless restrictions, extreme oversight, and endless bureaucracy. For example, a person must check with a zoning official just to place a sign on their own property. In my own personal case, I was told I could have just one sign, no greater than 64 square feet, with six words or less, and I had to personally be involved if it was a business.

The number of building codes is swelling at a phenomenal rate. My wife and I bought an old school with the ideals of providing affordable housing, doing charitable good, and providing our children with an experience of a lifetime. This dream was shattered by an

ill-intentioned building inspector, building use restrictions, and endless bureaucracy. It took us thirty months to get approval to move into our own building. If you move into your own building without a temporary certificate of occupancy from the building inspector, they can have you forcibly removed and charge you with a misdemeanor. Is this freedom? During the course of the project, building permits were delayed for two months on two different occasions while small items were addressed. Seventeen sets of floor plans were submitted, along with two sets of plumbing designs, fire alarm designs, HVAC/Mechanical Plans, and wiring plans.

Professionals were mandatory, including mechanical engineers, architect, plan reviewer (to help the building inspector), fire alarm design specialist, master plumber, and master electrician. Virtually every detail is dictated to you, leaving little to the imagination.

### **The Watered-Down Bill of Rights**

The United States Bill of Rights grants individual rights that have been attacked and denied for decades.

Article 3 of the Bill of Rights states, “*Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peacefully to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances.*”

You now need a permit to protest, and even then, you are given a designated area, sometimes out of site of the place or even being protested. This practice is clearly designed to silence the dissenters.

Article 7 states in part, “*nor shall any person...be deprived of life, liberty, or property, without due process of law...*”

Every day family courts deprive parents, predominantly fathers, of equal time with their children. Courts routinely give them a couple of weekends a month, while making them pay 25% and up in child support. They tack on daycare and medical portions, as well as insurance coverage.

The court system discourages self-representation by the average American through its numerous filing requirements, terminology, and formality. The majority of judges warn Pro Se (self-represented) individuals of the risk they entail by representing themselves, further discouraging such attempts. Our founding fathers did not intend for lawyers to have exclusive representative rights in the court room, but only to represent those that needed it. The liberty of Americans is only served through informal procedures that doesn't require the services of an attorney.

Article 8 states, “*In all criminal prosecutions, the accused shall enjoy the right to a speedy and public trial...*”

Alleged criminals, victims, and victim's families now wait up to years for a hearing. There are no speedy and public trials. The system itself, and some of its encompassing laws, have created the backlog of cases. For instance, no states recognize the equal right to parental time, and pits mom against dad in a winner takes all competition. This is a clear design for battle, not negotiation. The reward of child support is enough for many unscrupulous, undeserving parents.

Article 10 says, "*Excessive bail shall not be required, nor excessive fines imposed, nor cruel and unusual punishments inflicted.*"

Child support payments are often excessive and put non-custodial parents in unfavorable living conditions.

The justice system favors the rich over the poor, the educated over the uneducated, the famous over the unknown.

*"I have sworn upon the altar of God eternal hostility against every form of tyranny over the mind of man."* – Thomas Jefferson

### **Conclusion**

What's the answer to the many decades of growing restrictions and bureaucracy? Roll it back as far as we can, as fast as we can. Review the endless rules governing areas infringing on individual rights. Eliminate all rules and regulations that are unreasonable and deserves to be left to the judgment of individuals.