

Lives, Fortunes, and Sacred Honor



By Paul Engel

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- What are your rights and liberties worth to you and your family?
- Are you will to stand up against those who are trying to infringe on your rights?
- Those who signed the Declaration pledged their lives, fortunes, and sacred honor. What will you pledge?

Things looked bleak for the colonies in 1776. The question of freedom had life and death consequences. Those 56 men who signed the Declaration of Independence knew they were committing treason against their king. They knew that freedom would cost them greatly. Yet they still pledged to each other their lives, fortunes, and sacred honor. Today, groups of people around this nation are still fighting for their independence. Not from political affiliation, but from ever expanding governments dedicated to taking away our independence, our freedom, and our right to life, liberty, and to pursue happiness. Will you stand by while your birthright as an American is taken away from you and your family? Will you join with others to make sure this remains the land of the free by once again becoming the home of the brave? Will you pledge your life, your fortune, and your sacred honor, not to me or to this nation, but to your children and those who will follow? As we remember Independence Day and the 56 men who pledged themselves to its cause, let us renew the call of freedom. Let us take this opportunity to remind tyrants and

despots that the American people were not born enslaved to their governments. Let us declare that liberty and freedom will not vanish from this nation. That we will not allow tyranny and fear to rule us. We will not go silently into that good night of subjugation. This July 4th, let us loudly proclaim:

This is OUR INDEPENDENCE DAY!

For most of my life, I was told that our destruction would come from outside. As a child I was taught to “duck and cover” from Soviet nuclear missiles. As a younger man, I was first told that an ice age, and then global warming would destroy us. I was told that we had to invade foreign nations or face certain destruction from terrorism. Lately, we’ve been told that our rights are being turned over to foreign entities like the World Health Organization, the World Economic Forum, and the United Nations. Turns out, what I had been taught most of my life was wrong. The real source of our destruction was much closer to home.

I apprehend no danger to our country from a foreign foe. Our destruction, should it come at all, will be from another quarter. From the inattention of the people to the concerns of their government, from their carelessness and negligence, I must confess that I do apprehend some danger. I fear that they may place too implicit a confidence in their public servants, and fail properly to scrutinize their conduct; that in this way they may be made the dupes of designing men, and become the instruments of their own undoing.

[Daniel Webster \[June 1, 1837\]](#)

Mr. Webster was right; we have become the instruments of our own undoing.

Disposed to Suffer, While Evils are Sufferable

all experience hath shewn, that mankind are more disposed to

suffer, while evils are sufferable, than to right themselves by abolishing the forms to which they are accustomed.

[Declaration of Independence](#)

For that last several years, around July 4th I have pointed out how much the Declaration of Independence is relevant to our lives today. How all of the grievances the colonies had against King George the states could now claim against the federal government, and how the circumstances that led to revolution have existed in these United States for years. Yet no real stand has been taken. It seems that the evils that drove our Founding Fathers to action are clearly sufferable today. Why do such infringements on our rights warrant little more than social media complaints? Have the American people been bribed into complacency? As Alexis DeTocqueville said:

The American Republic will endure until the day Congress discovers that it can bribe the public with the public's money

Alexis De Tocqueville

Do we consider bread and circuses sufficient compensation for our God given rights? It seems the American people have so devalued their rights that we will trade them for the most obviously false promise of a little safety. I'm reminded of a line John Adams penned to his wife Abigail:

Posterity! You will never know, how much it cost the present Generation, to preserve your Freedom! I hope you will make a good Use of it. If you do not, I shall repent in Heaven, that I ever took half the Pains to preserve it.

[Letter from John Adams to Abigail Adams, 26 April 1777](#)

While Mr. Adams is almost assuredly repenting in heaven, all is not lost for the republic for which he paid so much. If Mr. Webster was correct, and I believe the facts and evidence show that he was, then it wasn't these outside organizations or

even those in our governments that destroyed our freedom, it was us. It was our carelessness and negligence, our blind trust in political parties, and our confidence in those we call public servants. While our guilt, and those of those before us, may not be a pleasant pill to swallow, it comes with a glimmer of hope.

When a Long Train of Abuses

But when a long train of abuses and usurpations, pursuing invariably the same Object evinces a design to reduce them under absolute Despotism, it is their right, it is their duty, to throw off such Government, and to provide new Guards for their future security.

[Declaration of Independence](#)

We have suffered a long train of abuses and usurpations of our rights. We have stood by while governments, both state and federal and led by both political parties, have pushed to reduce us to the victims of utter despotism. Yet still, most Americans will not even stand up to the illegal acts of their government. We keep hoping and praying that some despot will be nice to us as he enslaves us. We act as if one political party or another will come to our rescue. We've watched as these people have not only turned us against each other, but against the very foundations of what makes us free. We have elevated those who have tormented us with their hatred, into those who have enslaved us with their rules. We are at the point now that every four years we are told the election of a president is the most important election ever. As George Washington warned us:

The disorders and miseries which result gradually incline the minds of men to seek security and repose in the absolute power of an individual; and sooner or later the chief of some prevailing faction, more able or more fortunate than his competitors, turns this disposition to the purposes of his own

elevation, on the ruins of public liberty.

[Washington's Farewell Address 1796](#)

This year is no different. Both sides point to the presumptive candidate from the other party and claim they will cause the destruction of our nation. The spirit of revenge which is so much a part of party politics, has led us to a point where some see the only resolution as a civil war. Have these abuses not gone on long enough?

We the People

Much of our torment and turmoil comes from the loss of a basic truth founded in the Constitution. A truth so fundamental that it is enshrined in the constitutions of most of our states. A truth stated by Thomas Jefferson:

that all power is inherent in the people; that they may exercise it by themselves, in all cases to which they think themselves competent

[Thomas Jefferson to John Cartwright, 5 June 1824](#)

A truth contained in the preamble to the Constitution:

We the People of the United States, ... do ordain and establish this Constitution for the United States of America.

[U.S. Constitution](#) – Preamble

That the powers we do not delegate to others, we retain for ourselves:

The powers not delegated to the United States by the Constitution, nor prohibited by it to the States, are reserved to the States respectively, or to the people.

[U.S. Constitution – Amendment X](#)

In short, it seems the American people keep looking for

someone else to keep them free, but the power to do so remains where it has always been: In our own hearts and hands.

Independence Day

In 1776, 56 men signed a document declaring that their states were independent, and therefore free from the tyranny of British rule. That required the overthrowing of colonial governments and replacing them with state governments, and overturning established laws to make new ones. While it may seem as daunting, what we need today is not nearly so grand. You see, we don't need to overthrow a government or overturn laws. We merely need to enforce those laws we already have and replace public servants who claim to be public masters. As John Francis Mercer said during the debates at the Constitutional Convention.

It is a great mistake to suppose that the paper we are to propose will govern the United States. It is the men whom it will bring into the Government and interest in maintaining it that is to govern them. The paper will only mark out the mode and the form. Men are the substance and must do the business.

[Madison's Notes to the Debates in the Federal Convention of 1787](#)

If we wish to be free of the unelected monstrosity of the "Administrative State", we need to realize that their power is a myth because the Constitution forbids most of them from existing. To be free, we must not only know the supreme law of the land, but have the fortitude to act upon it. The Constitution marks out the form, but it is up to us to provide the substance and do the business. If we are to be the land of the free, then We the People need to be brave enough to stand and declare our independence. Independence from the illegal agencies, from the usurpation of powers, and from ignoring both the law and the oath those in government took to support it. Independence from foreign laws that have no legal standing

under the Constitution, and independence from the tyranny of men and political parties alike, to bribe, bully, and intimidate us into giving up our rights.

Let's take the opportunity of this Fourth of July to pledge to each other, to our children, and to future generations, our lives, our fortunes, and our sacred honor. Let us make today our Independence Day.

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