

THE SWEET LAND OF LIBERTY IS IN MORTAL DANGER

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“Sweet land of liberty, of thee I sing...”

How many times did we sing that, never thinking about those simple, precious words? Yet if history teaches us anything it is that liberty is elusive. Precious. It can slip away like a shadow, with hardly a whisper. Before you know it it's gone and once gone it is not so easy for the people to get back. The powerful do not readily let it go. It has to be ripped from their hands. Fought for.

More than 800 years ago, King John of England was forced to cede liberty to the knights at Runnymede. He signed the Magna Carta and thereby guaranteed them the rights and privileges we now take for granted like equal justice under law.

Five hundred years later the founders of the United States fought a long and bloody war to wrest liberty for us from the hands of King George and secure it for posterity. They took many of the ideas embodied in the Magna Carta and enshrined them in our own Bill of Rights.

Like the frog that will jump out of a pot of boiling water but swim contentedly until he becomes *cuissees de grenouilles* in water that is gradually warming, we have stood by in modern America and watched as our liberties have been eroded.

One by one we have willingly given them up, sacrificed them on the altar of public safety under the guise of allowing the government to protect us. *Seatbelts Save Lives. Motorcycle helmets are important. Saving lives. Public safety. We must stay home and not venture out without protective gear. We will get the Chinese flu and die.* Who could argue with that? What could possibly be wrong with that?

But when the government becomes the guarantor of a safe life, self-responsibility goes out the window. We don't have to think. We don't have to make difficult decisions. The Great Leaders in Washington or in Lansing or in Sacramento or in Denver will tell us what to do.

Helped by a compliant and complicit media the Great Leaders will tell us when we have to stay home. When we have to close our business. When and how we can gather for worship on an important holiday. What we have to wear on our faces. All in the name of protecting us. What could possibly be wrong with that?

It's as if we have become too stupid to protect ourselves. The descendants of people who carved a civilization out of an untamed continent. We, whose actual and figurative ancestors came across miles of barren land, who fought and won wars against powerful enemies arrayed against us in Europe and Asia have sold our birthright for a few pieces of silver. And now we have suddenly become too stupid to know when to come in out of the rain?

Nowhere am I saying that the Chinese Flu is a figment of anyone's imagination. It is serious. It can be deadly. But I am arguing for perspective. I am arguing for telling the truth to the American people and letting us draw our own conclusions. And I am arguing for a return to self-responsibility.

The lawyers and their laws can't protect us from everything you know even though that is what they want us to

believe. We have forgotten they work for us and in fact it is us who are responsible for reading the fine print and drawing our own conclusions. Asking the right questions. Demanding cogent answers.

What kind of liberties are we willing to give up to have a safe life? To paraphrase what Ben Franklin said 250 years ago, *“Those who would sacrifice their liberty for a little safety are deserving of neither liberty nor safety.”*

Once it’s gone, once we accept dumping sand on a skateboard park keeps us safe from the Chinese flu, once we accept that we can be forbidden to peacefully pursue our religion, once we put up with the mayor of a city, acting like a commissar, threatening to turn off the water and power unless we comply, the genie is out of the bottle. Where does it end?

As the punchline to the old joke goes, the ruling class already knows what we are, we are merely haggling with them about the price.

“Is life so dear, or peace so sweet, as to be purchased at the price of chains and slavery? Forbid it, Almighty God!” Patrick Henry 1775

The people protesting in the streets of San Diego and Idaho and Los Angeles and Denver are saying “halt.” You have gone as far as we will let you go. You are treading on our liberty and it is time to take it back. They are on the front lines of protecting our liberties. They know that it will soon be too late.

Not for nothing did Thomas Jefferson once write: *“the tree of liberty must be refreshed from time to time with the blood of patriots & tyrants. It is its natural manure.”*

Are we finding out what he really meant?

Is being forced into Social Isolation the new identity politics? United we stand. Divided we fall. Is being forced to stay home and not work a diabolical way for the ruling class to divide us? Are the leaders hoping that by doing that they will destroy our Social Compact, the indispensable First Principle of American freedom?

It was Robert Bates, a delegate to the Constitutional Convention, who explained that *“In every free government, the people must give their assent to the laws by which they are governed.”* I don’t know anyone in their right mind who would assent to closing skateboard parks and forbidding people to buy furniture and electronics on the grounds that it would make us safer from the dreaded Chinese flu.

One by one we have been browbeaten into relinquishing our liberties for the most innocent of motives. If this trend is left unchecked we will eventually find out why Emiliano Zapata once said: *“I would rather die on my feet than live on my knees.”*

And that would be the end of the Great Experiment that is America.

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