

# On Liberty and Tyranny in America

by Sophia Smithe

"Is life so dear, or peace so sweet, as to be purchased at the price of chains and slavery? Forbid it, Almighty God! I know not what course others may take; but as for me, *give me liberty or give me death!*"<sup>1</sup> In these simple, yet profound words, Patrick Henry powerfully articulates one of the defining principles of the United States of America: Liberty. It was one of the primary reasons that our pilgrim fathers departed the comforts of their native home and journeyed across the treacherous ocean into the face of unspeakable hardships and dangers. It was for the sake of this principle that General George Washington led an army of courageous soldiers to march, despite impossible odds, against the British invaders who were tyrannizing the nation. Throughout the history of our country, we can observe countless examples of heroic men who have fought and died for liberty, and we too must contend for its preservation in our day.

Just after sunrise on April 19, 1775, the first shots of the American Revolutionary War were fired on the Lexington Green. The colonists had collectively determined that due to the oppressive acts of tyranny by the government of Great Britain, they were no longer bound by its rule. By unjust taxation and intrusive acts perpetrated against the colonists, Britain repeatedly trampled on their God-given liberties and they would tolerate it no longer! The war for independence would last eight long years, and during that time many bloody battles would be fought, claiming the lives of thousands of brave colonists. Ultimately, however, they would succeed in throwing off the shackles of tyranny, and would then go on to establish a new government based on biblical laws of freedom and justice, in which they believed "*that [all men] are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness.*"<sup>2</sup>

Due to the courage and conviction of our founding fathers, we as Americans have enjoyed a measure of freedom that few countries ever have, or ever will, experience. However, our 21<sup>st</sup> century American liberty is now being threatened with a new tyranny, one from within our own government. Cleverly disguised as a form of 'charity', the evils of socialism are eating away at our freedoms, quickly hastening us along the path to outright communism. As radio host and author Mark Levin observed: "So distant is America today from its founding principles that it is difficult to precisely describe the nature of American government. It is not strictly a constitutional republic, because the Constitution has been and continues to be easily altered by a judicial oligarchy that mostly enforces, if not expands, the Statist's agenda. It is not strictly a representative republic, because so many edicts are produced by a maze of administrative departments that are unknown to the public and detached from its sentiment. It is not strictly a federal republic, because the states that gave the central government life now live at its behest. What, then, is it? It is a society steadily transitioning towards statism."<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Henry, Patrick. "Give Me Liberty Or Give Me Death." *Liberty Online*. 4 Jan. 2011 <<http://libertyonline.hypermall.com>>.

<sup>2</sup> The Declaration of Independence. 1776.

<sup>3</sup> Levin, Mark. "*Liberty and Tyranny: A Conservative Manifesto.*" New York: Threshold Editions, 2009.

The founding fathers understood that government should have limits, and consequently set boundaries that would prevent any one person or group from possessing an undue amount of power. Constitutional Attorney Douglas Phillips Esq. recently stated: “The Tenth Amendment reads: ‘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.’. What does this mean in plain English? It means this: The federal government is not our nanny. The federal government is not our mother. The federal government is not our doctor. The federal government is not the high priest of a new religion. And, ladies and gentlemen, the federal government is not our Savior! That designation is reserved to one person only, the Lord Jesus Christ...”<sup>4</sup>

Regrettably, through a slow and steady process, our government has overstepped their jurisdictional bounds and is seeking to dictate and control nearly every area of our lives. The freedom and liberty of Americans is in serious jeopardy! Unless we grasp the importance of standing for liberty, we can be assured that we will ultimately suffer defeat as a nation. History is replete with examples of countries that traded freedom for a “supreme” government, one which seeks to meet every human need and control every arena of culture: Food, clothing, shelter, medical care, education, child-rearing, religion, entertainment, and the list goes on. Although on the surface it appears to be an ideal arrangement, providing security and equality for all, it is corrupt at its core. History proves that the countries that have defaulted to socialism suffer under the rule of tyrants, and eventually fall into poverty and ruin.

Why is it that we are seeing this massive drift away from our biblical foundations of freedom and justice? It is because we have rejected the ultimate giver of those laws. R.J. Rushdoony observed, “Our historic American position... has been... that true liberty is under law, God’s law.”<sup>5</sup> Even as recently as 1982, Congress declared 1983 to be the ‘Year of the Bible.’ In that official pronouncement they stated that the Bible “inspired concepts of civil government that are contained in our Declaration of Independence and the Constitution.”<sup>6</sup> In fact, when we examine our founding documents, we notice more citations of the Bible than any other source. Yet, sadly, our nation seems to have forgotten its Christian heritage for which our ancestors labored so hard. Gone are the days when, as the U.S. Supreme Court stated in 1931, we can boldly say “We are a Christian people.”<sup>7</sup> The reality is simple: We cannot and will not have liberty unless we surrender ourselves to the giver of true liberty. In a joint proclamation, John Adams and John Hancock said, “We recognize no Sovereign but God, and no King but **Jesus!**”<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> Phillips, Douglas. “Alamo City Tea Party: Phillips Calls Attendees to Honor our Fathers and Seek the Lord.” *Vision Forum Ministries*. 17 April 2009. Vision Forum. 4 Jan. 2011  
<<http://www.visionforumministries.org>>

<sup>5</sup> Rushdoony, Rousas John. “*Law and Liberty*.” Vallecito: Ross House Books, 2009.

<sup>6</sup> DeMar, Gary. “*America’s Christian Heritage*.” Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 2003.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>8</sup> *Founding Fathers Quotes*. 19 Feb. 2007. EadsHome Ministries. 4 Jan. 2011.  
<<http://www.eadshome.com>>.

The future of our nation depends upon us rising up in this critical time and fighting for those liberties that made our country great. We must do as our founding fathers did and not consent to live under the rule of tyrants who would seek to abrogate those freedoms and create a nation of government dependant individuals. Liberty, true liberty, is what our government was established upon. Our Declaration of Independence recognizes that "...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."<sup>9</sup>

In speaking of the importance of fighting for our freedom, President Ronald Regan powerfully stated, "Freedom is never more than one generation away from extinction. We didn't pass it to our children in the bloodstream. It must be fought for, protected, and handed on for them to do the same, or one day we will spend our sunset years telling our children and our children's children what it was once like in the United States where men were free."<sup>10</sup> Amen. May we always fight for liberty, so help us God.

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<sup>9</sup> The Declaration of Independence. 1776.

<sup>10</sup> Levin, Mark. "*Liberty and Tyranny: A Conservative Manifesto.*" New York: Threshold Editions, 2009.