



AGENDA *for* FREEDOM



Submitted with respect to:

THE HONORABLE DONALD J. TRUMP
President of the United States of America

In its remarkable founding America endowed the world with an idea backed up by the first truly constitutional republic designed to protect and defend that idea. The idea was simple in its articulation and immeasurably profound in its impact. What was it?

There is no true liberty without freedom of conscience.

In any truly free society, freedom of conscience is the bedrock principle supporting and enabling all other liberties. Said another way, those unable to live their lives according to the dictates of conscience are not truly free.

Free speech without liberty of conscience is a contradiction. A free press without liberty of conscience is a chimera. Freedom of assembly (and hence of association) without liberty of conscience is a palliative delusion. And the most mendacious assertion of all is that one can have true religious liberty without freedom of conscience.

Freedom of conscience is the *sine qua non* of all personal freedoms. Without liberty of conscience the First Amendment descends from the lofty realms of principle to becoming a byword of false hopes and ephemeral hypocrisy.

While some Americans remained blissfully ignorant, the last eight years of the Obama Administration wrought a systematic dismantling of freedom of conscience. Doctors who previously refused to perform abortions or other medical procedures that conflict with their deep personal convictions, can no longer claim an exemption based upon conscience. And witness the Christian bakers, florists, and photographers persecuted merely for attempting to live their lives according to the dictates of conscience.

All of this is what America rejected in the last election cycle. The pseudo-socialist ideals of progressive liberals have become a bridge too far. The nanny-state has been unmasked, with no trace of Mrs. Doubtfire underneath. Instead we see the leering and malevolent face of Big Brother looking to devour the freedoms of all who object to the liberal conception of a socialist utopia.

The irony here is deep. Progressive liberals, who claim to so highly value personal freedom, are the intentional agents of its devastation. But the mask has long since come off these supposed “defenders of freedom,” as we see that the only freedoms liberal socialists really attend to are their own. Everyone else can go to the gulag for all they seem to care.

In the last election cycle, all those well-meaning young people who rejected one rank socialist (Mrs. Clinton) in favor of another who was merely more honest (Senator Sanders) were unwittingly attempting to sow the seeds of their own destruction. How little do they understand the realities of socialism whose leaders will brook no competing authority—not the church, not parental authority, and certainly not the conscience of the individual.

Any true Agenda for Freedom, therefore, must be rooted in the restoration of the most vital and fundamental freedom: the freedom to live one’s life according to the dictates of one’s own conscience. How then are we to return to that founding ideal that for 240 years has been the very DNA of the American Experiment?

1 The Restoration of Limited Government

- a. The Founders intended a limited federal government with enumerated powers—restricted only to those specified, with the 10th Amendment reserving all non-enumerated powers to the states and the people.

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- b. The Founders intended a government that (as Lincoln put it) would be of, by, and for the people—not a professional class of bureaucratic overseers.
- c. The Founders sought to everywhere limit government power, making the massive regulatory apparatus, which seeks to make law on its own authority, anathema to the idea of such limits. An unconstrained bureaucracy may be the single greatest enemy of freedom.
- d. Most importantly, the Constitution never envisioned a government that could or would obtrude itself into every aspect of individual lives and freedoms.

2 The Restoration of the Separation of Powers

- a. In two generations America has witnessed the almost total demolition of the constitutionally required separation of powers. If anything, that process accelerated under the liberal socialism of the last eight years.
- b. The poster child of the violation of the separation of powers is the judicial tyranny of the federal court system—with the U.S. Supreme Court being the chief, serial violator.
- c. Second only to the out of control federal courts has been the growing and systematic overreach of presidential authority through the use of executive orders and the unilateral reinterpretation of federal law, and the bald-faced refusal to enforce existing law.
- d. The reapplication of constitutional checks and balances may be the only hope for a return to the separation of powers envisioned by the Founders and required by the Constitution.

3 The Restoration of Federalism

- a. Perhaps the single greatest enemy of freedom is the insatiable desire and effort of the federal government to draw all power away from the states. Washington, D.C. has become the political black hole of the nation, drawing everything into its orbit. In so doing it violates the first principle of representative government, which is that the best government is the one closest to the people.
- b. The first step in the restoration of federalism must be the return of authority over education to the states, where school principals and administrators are also residents of the communities they serve.

4 The Rejection of Efforts to Diminish Parental Authority

- a. Perhaps the most insidious aspect of the destruction of freedom of conscience is the systematic undermining of parental authority by government.
- b. Parental authority and responsibility was delegated by God Himself, with the family being the only institution able to best attain the welfare of children.
- c. Parents like all citizens are subject to the just laws of the state, but while they deserve the presumption of parenting in the best interests of children, they are often denied due process by government entities.
- d. Government efforts to shape the values of children—often in contradiction to the values of their parents—is one of the hallmarks of socialist governments, which seek to undermine all authority but their own.

5 The Rejection of Unconstitutional Intrusion into the Affairs of the Church

- a. Nowhere is the constitutional limitation of government authority more clear than in its total lack of jurisdiction over the affairs of the church.
- b. The church is an institution established by God Himself and operates under His sovereign authority.
- c. Church members, like all citizens, are subject to the just laws of the state, but nowhere is government granted the constitutional authority to prescribe or proscribe matters of faith, doctrine, or practice.

6 The Defense of National Autonomy in the Face of Globalism

America remains absolutely unique among the community of nations. Every effort to diminish America's national sovereignty through subservience to global institutions is an assault on the Constitution specifically, and on freedom of conscience generally. The future of the American Experiment may well hinge upon retaining America's national sovereignty. ■