## Freedom is Never More Than a Generation Away

My immediate thoughts on Ronald Reagan's quote are that "It cannot happen here." But, it is happening. Freedom is the natural yearning of the human spirit, and it is in juxtaposition to the inclination of our government. Government and the power of the state serves foremost and above to serve itself Humankind, for thousands of years has been subject to dictators, chiefs, czars, kings and rulers that have attempted to control their "subjects". The United States of America has proven to be the exception, at least until now. Individual liberty is being attacked with a vengeance. It does not come as a complete surprise, as I reflect upon my eight plus decades of life. Our American form of government had a noble birth. Initially, its powers were both enumerated and limited. Our Founders put strict limits upon our guarantors of powers in the Constitution. What began as a noble and unobtrusive birth of a nation, has, over the course of two centuries become a powerfully engorged and bloated infringing toddler, moving rapidly to the point of becoming a demanding, active, obnoxious and intrusive teenager. The bigger it grows, the faster it expands and the more it appropriates our liberties. Far from securing our liberties, the American government today sees freedom as its competition. My children and grandchildren need to be rooted in truth and liberty, ready to wield their immense powers of morality and liberty, if they are to live free. I never thought I would see the day when the federal government could seize control of the banks and industries of mortgages, automobiles, energy and health care. These things are not happening in regard to the tenants of the Unites States Constitution!

Ronald Reagan told us in 1967 that America was complacent and did not appreciate fully our freedoms. He admonished Americans that freedom comes only once to a people, and that those who have known freedom, and then lost it, have never known it again. We are dangerously close to losing our freedom, and it saddens me that it can happen here. How have we come to the point where we fear for the futures of our children and grandchildren? At no other time did owning a business or producing an income make one an enemy of the state. The Bill of Rights and the United States Constitution should be the *ideal* when making policies. This country is the last and best hope for mankind, and it is under attack. This generation inherited the Constitution, and it must be defended at all cost. They did not, however, inherit the right to rewrite it or remake it, but rather to uphold it. Greatness in America is delivered through the entrepreneurial spirit and the inventions and innovations that better our lives. We have much to be proud of, to preserve and to grow. There will come a day, if it is not opposed, that Americans will wonder what happened to their country...why weren't we warned, and what happened to our freedoms.

Our Constitution tells the government what "We the people" allow it to do. "We the people" should be able to live in freedom. We must not capitulate in our principles, for a strengthening government breeds a weak individual and will destroy this nation. "We the people" are free. It isn't complicated. We must keep faith in the principles of our Founders and those of Ronald Reagan, and prove willing to advance the cause of freedom's agenda as they did in the past. We should not be controlled. We should not be quiet. This is a country where we ARE the people, and our rights are unalienable for which we thank our Creator. The greatest generation was strong and virtuous. We preserved liberty and stood firm against dictators and fascists. We can encourage our progeny to stand firm against those who wish to remake this nation. James Madison once said: "America united with a handful of troops, or without a single soldier, exhibits a more forbidding posture to foreign ambition than America disunited, with a hundred thousand veterans ready for combat." For America to remain free, to triumph adversity, we must be combat ready. We must know our twin enemies: ignorance and complacence. Knowing our enemy requires us to believe the mounting evidence before us, to understand deep within our marrow that defeating the enemy will require every last measure of strength we possess.

We have met the enemy, face to face and will to will. We have known hardship and glory, with bleeding feet at Valley Forge. We survived a painful birth at Yorktown. We are the pioneers who settled the plains and expanded a free country across a continent. From Bull Run to Gettysburg, our blood ran red to preserve this union. We stood tall at Somme and prevailed at the Bulge. We battled at Bataan and Corregidor and sent brave men to fight and die for freedom's cause. We are America, and we are "We the people." If we are worth preserving, we are worth fighting for. Freedom is never free.

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