



(Posted by Stephen L. Bakke on April 8, 2014. Sometimes an article simply "rings true" with me. I hope you enjoy this article as much as I do. It starts slowly with a discussion of the recent Supreme Court decision that the government can't decide limits on contributions an American can make to a candidate, party, or committee. It quickly and dramatically evolves into Paul Greenberg's personal declaration of liberty! If you read nothing else at least read the last few paragraphs which I have highlighted with *different colored BOLD italics*. - SB)

 **A BLOW FOR LIBERTY**
By Paul Greenberg
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at JewishWorldReview.com


The people yes
The people will live on.
The learning and blundering
people will live on.

- Carl Sandburg, "The People, Yes"



By the splittest of split decisions, by the narrowest and, yes, the most partisan and ideological differences of opinion, the Supreme Court of the United States has decided that our rulers may not decide the total amount an American may contribute to a political candidate, party or committee. Because five of the nine justices on the court realize that the power to limit our advocacy, that is, our ability to influence others, is the power to limit our speech. And the Constitution of the United States comes with this little clause saying Congress shall make no law -- *no* law -- abridging our freedom of speech. It's called the First Amendment.

On the other side of this issue were those justices who were willing to grant government that power. It's for the people's own good, they explained -- a precaution against corruption and the evils of letting Americans say what we want as many times as we want. Like through newspapers and radio and television ads and mailers and political parties and committees and all the rest of those loud, annoying irritations every election year and, these days, between them.

What a bother. And dangerous, too, said the minority in dissent. Why? Because we the people and dumb clucks can't be trusted to see through all that propaganda and exercise our own judgment. Not when we can have government do it for us by regulating campaign finance, and therefore everything it finances. Like political speech.

There you have the essence of this argument. Which side are you on?

Me, my opinion was formed a long time ago, and it is heartfelt: Lord save us from those who are out to save us. Please leave us to make our own decisions and, yes, our own mistakes, we the learning and blundering people. Let the people rule. Do it in the faith that we the people will learn from our mistakes. And might even proceed to correct them, rather than leave those mistakes for others to make for us. Specifically, those in political power.

The people, yes, do learn. While those who generously offer to make our decisions for us, once they are granted that power, have a way of holding onto it. For ever and ever. Because power corrupts,

too. And this latest decision out of the high court trusts the people rather than those in power, which, if you have to make such a choice, is the right one.

But note how narrow was the decision in this case, and how easily overturned when the appetite for power recovers from this blow for liberty and is whetted again. That one-vote margin is one more illustration of how vulnerable the spirit of liberty is, and why it requires eternal vigilance. Day after day. Which happens to be the publication schedule of a daily newspaper.

Let freedom ring -- even if makes a wild cacophony. Restore us as in days of yore, the years of our youth, when liberty was young and the thrill of it wasn't yet gone, when this infant republic was already the hope of the world even if the world didn't know it.

Rekindle the Spirit of '76, when colonial pamphleteers flooded this still new country with their opinions, respectable or quirky, armed only with their utter conviction, printing presses, and trays of hand-set type, which might as well have been ammunition in their never-ceasing fights, often enough with one another. Let that old free-for-all have a new birth of life.

Let every voice be raised in raucous, uneven chorus. Voice your principles and convictions, Americans, and your crackpot theories and political manias, too. Give it your best shot, George Soros. Let us have it, Koch Brothers. Listen to Walt Whitman, one and all, and open your barbaric yawp.

The more genteel types among us keep saying that American politics is much too raucous these days. My own considered opinion is that it ain't near raucous enough. This country needs a new birth of freedom, and newborns ain't exactly quiet, passive types.

Yes, restore us as in the days of our youth. Listen and you can hear, in the divided and deeply felt opinions of all these justices, majority and minority, the sound of free Americans going at it citation by citation and claim after claim, and, off in the distance, the trill of a fife and rat-a-tat-tat of a drum playing Yankee Doodle Dandy. It's the sound of free, unbridled speech. And it's music to the ears.

Go to it, Americans. As if you lived in a free country.

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