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The Price of Freedom is Eternal Vigilance

Vol. 61 No. 42

24th October 2025

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I Want To Break Free By Neville Archibald

If I play an excerpt from Queen's, *I want to break free*, featuring Freddy Mercury's unique and powerful voice, would you listen?

Freddie here is wanting to break free – looking for freedom to be who he was!

Now I am sure there are many who would baulk at using this song to express 'our' concepts of freedom – due in part to the perceived ungodliness of Freddie's lifestyle and the promoted aspects therein. At its heart, it is no different to the freedom of any individual in a society, that prides itself on letting the grass roots decide: on letting the quest for freedom reign. Even if it is a freedom to pursue something different from what we see as right. God or nature will determine the final outcome of ones desired freedom – it is not up to us!

As a group, we are often targeted for the smallest of perceived bias. For connections to associations that make mention of things that could be misinterpreted or fully demonised to further the shut down of rational thought. The true search for truth.

So I use that song to challenge this push for freedom and to ask what this, 'will to freedom' should look like, for if it only exists to go from one view to another, then we become guilty of the same vice as a power mad totalitarian.

To this end, we must address the nature of freedom! At what point is it no longer freedom in the eyes of others. The classic example is in freedom of speech and actions in a theatre. This is trotted out so often in descriptions that it is worth looking at.

The freedom to stand up and make a ruckus among your fellow theatre goers is indeed a freedom you should possess.

If you yelled out words that revealed the outcome of the play, is that worse than yelling Fire! When there is none. Both despoil the experience, but one creates panic and possible injury (physical) rather than the emotional one of a ruined surprise ending perhaps.

We have one right, but not the other, due, in part, from this 'love thy neighbour' and 'do unto others', that we expect from our fellow man. The fight for personal freedom over the collective, in this case, would be said to be limited. In another example (rarely used) the right of a con man to fleece his marks, or that of a politician to lie to his constituents. Both elicit harm to many. Have both of these villains got rights to take these actions?

We would say no – and create laws to punish wrongdoers – even if it is their right to rob others of their expectations. The first, the con man, is taking something of concrete value – demonstrable in fact. The second is taking confidence and emotional realities, but not always physically demonstrable.

We would (and do) let them suffer for their indiscretions by losing the confidence of those they respect and thereby putting their lively-hoods at risk. They can be de-elcted (is that a term?). What about the damage they have done though? Are we not justified to hold them responsible.

You might say the same of the conman and that he too would get his just desserts, or the gullible become more aware, more power to him!

So this becomes a part of what we are now facing. We have on one hand, obvious limitations – for the greater good – (and I hate that saying) and lesser ones for an action that is probably far more dangerous in that it is insidious and harder to see. The confusion that exists in this dichotomy has been the very tool used by those very exploitative freedom seekers. To muddy the waters of expectation and accountability.

I feel this process has been two edged. Well thought out no doubt, but coming at us from two sides.

The nanny state, is a term you would be familiar with, where all aspects of freedom are dealt with before the fact, as restrictions; thus ensuring that responsibilities, the flip side of freedoms, are never really taught or learned.

The 'we will look after you' mentality that is fostered, does the job remarkably well. Learning to be on the look out for danger (in whatever form it takes) is removed by us never facing the lesser dangers first. We are all tricked at times, out of something that matters to us. In this way we become wary and critical. It develops and hones the critical thinking ability. The bike helmeted child who is protected from injury, never sees the consequences of their stupidity. Protected by the state from all these things or limited by the state, so that you cannot experience these defeats, these challenges to your 'freedoms to do' you become

largely unaware of them. Again our ability to think critically has been shackled.

Most of these restrictions to freedoms have been justified and sold as safety issues for community. It certainly has not solved the problem, for that other edge of that sword still cuts.

The flip side, the other edge, is the lack of education in responsibility. Like when you take away the reality, but do not provide an abstract or safe way to learn, like civics classes or how you fit in to society. The rights, responsibilities and expectations of belonging, are not countering those losses in the real world. The challenge to think, to envision community life is fragmented at best. It exists in simplistic form but as a service rather than a push back against wrongs. Taking the law into your own hands when the state fails, is the outcome of it. Because this is uncontrolled in degree of reaction, it is used to justify your taking no action at all – waiting for someone else to do it for you. (The Nanny State to deal with it for you.)

The service or 'servitude' side is promoted, 'slaves for the common good', but with each of those service movements, full discussion on righting wrongs is organised to be pushed to the top – moved further up the chain of command, rather than fixing it at a grass roots level. We seem to always defer to the state. An abdication of responsibility once again. This is more often seen in bureaucracy as pushing the paper until the buck stops at the top. A hesitation or refusal to take responsibility. Many still see the critical need and are prepared to fix it or deal with it, but are restrained by procedure, insurance or by hierarchical power.

So you want to break free,

We see this rise of desire for freedom. Vaguely expressed as a feeling of suppression and hopelessness in the face of difficulty; frustration in the system that will not allow corrections without serious and often impossible effort.

We all just want to be me, unfettered and able to pursue what we want, when we want. For Freddie, it was his style of music, his control of the content and the unusual interpretation of his artistic flair. This was often at odds with his controllers, the industry he was working in. His vision was different to theirs and he wanted the freedom to be just himself.

We are faced with people today, who are expecting to be left alone to pursue their own freedoms. Freedoms that are often not freedoms but just different cages, as we are categorised and labelled. People forced to fit in prepared moulds. True personal development is stifled by a self perpetuating set of lists, to tick off as we challenge each long held normality.

As a society we were growing up, we rejected and were rejecting many of the things considered unchristian. This was the pursuit of advancement we looked

towards in this modern era. Instead we have been desensitised to corruption and lies, and let the people, whose will for power over us, pushes their freedom above ours. (Orwell's - some pigs!) we have seen the rise of Humanism with it's vague concepts of 'we are god', we do not need these 'Godly' restrictions, those of Christ. To these humanist influences, we have acted as children, afraid to criticise our parents. The usurping of parental control by government has allowed this to influence our common sense. Our diminishing ability to see ourselves as adults, also with an equal power, has left us cowering like naughty children. Not knowing necessarily what we've done wrong! Obeying the rebukes in the belief that the more mature 'the enlightened' along with the 'educated', know better.

I believe society at large and the 'love thy neighbour population' has not grown up as quickly as the 'love yourself first' proportion of it has.

We have been hampered by our own lack of desire at a cost, for we recognise that cost as what it is, immoral, social cohesion breaking ideals. We struggle to see or even believe that others can believe that, let alone that they would act on it.

We then lack the ability to challenge it when it does. The lie of 'it's only business'.

The will to power operates outside the box we live in the methods used and the warfare enacted is not a part of our will to freedom.

Maybe it is a cycle that repeats itself, an invariable tide of man's social interaction; trying to come to terms with who he is.

The will to freedom must become far stronger than it currently is and must learn to counter those whose power restricts ours.

How do we do this is a challenge for all of you reading this.

We believe it is the individual, the grass roots that must pull us out of this, and in a way that is permanent.

A benign ruler may be strong enough to wrest away the control, and institute control of the individual, but to keep it and to halt the cycle of repeat, the collective (as individuals) must be enlightened and enlivened enough to take on that responsibility. We must take it on as seriously as those whose will to power over us, pushes them to do so.

Education and awakening, rather than the other way around is the only hope for lasting freedom.

Too many now have no real idea what freedom consists of, and even fewer remember. The burning desire of power is far hotter for the self loving, than it is in those who wish to be left alone.

We must realise we are: **1/ not alone**

2/ more powerful together if we speak up

3/ ultimately the better choice to live under.

How much these realisations empower us is up to how much we, as individuals, promote them - and in our conviction to then see them enacted. ***

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On Target is printed and authorised by Arnis J. Luks
13 Carsten Court, Happy Valley, SA.