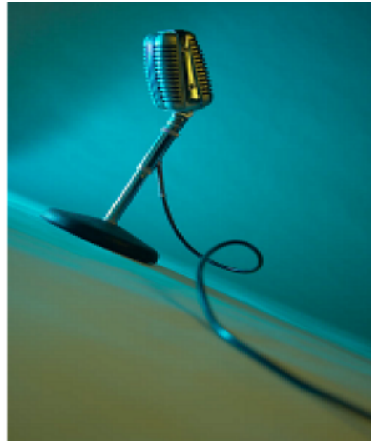


IF i HAD A VOICE

By Frank Mancuso, Ph.D.



A voice dims in a crowd of a thousand, dies in a crowd often thousand and is silent in a million, unless others who passionately believe in the message freely echo that voice. Let them ring until the collective is heard by our 50 states, until the states resound in unison and it reaches the halls of Congress, the wings of the White House and the chambers of our highest court. Let them yield to the Constitutional will of the people.

Though i am but one of “We, the people,” i am not alone. My voice may never be heard, but our voice can. i am driven to put words of understanding to the growing fear in my heart and the tears in my eyes, but they are not just mine. Like many, i possess the great American spirit of being a fiercely independent thinker who believes in rugged individualism. i am a protective soul who also believes in the awesome and profound power of community. In these desperate times, i will retain my soul’s hope for a better tomorrow for all and undying respect for the principles of our American fathers of old. Like them, i will not give way to a god lesser than democracy, but will arm and fight with words and actions necessary to keep my freedom and rights where they belong—in my hands. i will not allow my fellow countrymen who surrendered their lives in battle to be in vain. i will not be tread upon, nor will i be silent.

If the world of American power could hear my voice, if what i believe also resonates in my country’s brothers and sisters, if my words could move another, who would move another, who... then my joy would swell up in me, sufficient for a lifetime.

i write for my 12-year old granddaughter, Hailey Victoria, and my 8-year old grandson, Benjamin James, who are innocent to the world of thundering forces reshaping their country. i want to protect their future from those in power from entering their bedrooms and claiming “imminent domain” over their belongings, exactly like our government-knows-best has done to adults whose properties have been stolen by a greedy interpretation of “in the interest of public use.” I want them to experience the quiet joy of knowing what a truly wonderful country we

have, of being thankful to previous generations who protected them and of knowing the security of a nation founded under God. They have a right to know these precious things. They have a right to this inheritance.

i write to the young adults who have yet to acquire the knowledge of what would happen to their freedoms, rights and motivation to achieve in a non-republic society. They may have been raised desiring to help others less fortunate, but i believe they don't want others demanding to whom and how much they are to give. Giving is morally correct, but legislated giving is immoral, as it leads to obligation and a law without heart. To be a cheerful giver means the individual must retain the right of choice. He or she determines what is fair, reasonable and moral in sharing, it cannot be imposed. Many young adults know the pain of their parents' divorce, which was imposed upon them. They know they had no voice. Many of them likely thought if only the governing parents had listened to them, it could have been different. My hope for young adults is their willingness to learn from others, present and past, before they, inevitably in time, become surprised and horrified by the oppressive power of their government and what they have lost.

i write to the states of America. When your conscience speaks to you in the quiet of night, do you listen? Have you sold your soul and your inhabitants' freedoms for government funding? Do you weigh the need for government help against the people's wishes and rights? Do you recognize the Constitutional power given you by your fathers of old? Do you possess their courage? Are you willing to take up the staff of power given you by those men of strength? The right of power belongs to the states and its people, not the national government. Do you have the courage to nullify all unconstitutional congressional legislation, executive orders and judicial laws? Are you willing to stand with your neighboring states in support of the people who asked you to protect them? If you don't, step down, let another lead. If you don't, we will find someone who will. There is no tenure in politics anymore.

Lastly, i write to the living Constitution. Our sagacious fathers not only gave you life where conception took place between mind and ink, but they knew how to sustain your life by laws filled with sufficient freedom of interpretation. They understood the unpredictability of life that required each generation to find its own Constitutional breath, which were to be true to the intentions of our fathers of old.

These independent thinkers knew they could not predict the future and write all the laws necessary to cover all circumstances. Any attempt at such would have placed us all under a legalistic set of laws that always ends up taking away life and liberty and undermines the pursuit of happiness. These thoughtful men deeply understood that a constitution had to be living, applied by living people in a future yet to be lived and according to the good intentions of its writers. It had to be simple and clear with flexible boundaries. Seventeen pages of genius became the founding pillar of American life. Seven Articles and ten Amendments made up the agreed upon principles by which significant conflict between the states was overcome, unity was preserved and confidence was held that this nation of liberty would be the greatest that ever existed.

If i had a voice i'd march the hallowed halls of time and hear the unfettered rallying cry of the colonial brave. i'd joyfully transport back to present-day America the words of spirited widows, orphans and musketed men of valor:

“Don't allow the blood of our grandparents, mothers, fathers, sons,
daughters, brothers, sisters, uncles, aunts and cousins to have been

poured out in vain. Don't allow the cherished dreams of our wise earthly creators to vanish. Don't allow the passion and righteous anger of our American designers pass into complacency. Those who will come after us have a duty to honor and protect these sacred visions born under the influence and hand of God. We were the first to give our lives to preserve your Life, the first to shed the shackles of tyranny to keep you at Liberty, and the first to encourage your right to pursue Happiness. You are our posterity, you are the people we died for, you are the ones in whose hands we place our great treasure of hope. Our memory lies with you in the present, don't let them fade. Hold fast to the precious boundaries we have laid and don't let them be moved without a fight. Remember the flag whose red stripes are dyed with the blood of Americans. Remember the stars, which were born in the eyes of a few great men. Remember the blue... and white..."

Do you believe in what "Lady Liberty" stands for? Or is she only French copper standing in vain? Is she to be silenced? Is her 1885 torch to be extinguished? Will she be stripped and our shame laid bare? Will she continue to be the beacon that lights the way through fears and tears to the hopes and joys of all who share this land with her? Or will she be pulled down into the Hudson River? Though she has no voice, she shouts silent words that sink deep into the minds and hearts of those who love our country.

The plains, hills, mountains and forests, the lakes, streams, ponds and oceans, the canyons, everglades, meadows and deserts ponder their future. They ask,

Will we remain American or are we destined to be divided or belong to another? The bones of those in Revolutionary times rest in our earth. They cry out to the future crafters of America, "Preserve life, ensure liberty and uphold the right of all who come after you to pursue happiness." Remember the nurses, factory workers, engineers, miners, spiritual leaders, entrepreneurs, volunteers, scientists, countless other workers and God on whom all this rests. Recall the military—the tens of millions who served, the millions who put their lives on the line and the hundreds of thousands who gave their last breath. They all kept our country a bright star of hope that proudly shines on a privileged people who know freedom as no other before them. Each new generation has remembered and found its own heart and reason to struggle against those without and within who are opposed to America.

I will not forget. I will preserve life, ensure liberty and uphold the rights of all. I am an American.