

WHAT IS FREEDOM or LIBERTY

Written by Calvin Fox

Thursday, 31 December 2015 16:15 - Last Updated Thursday, 31 December 2015 16:16

The word is almost always connected with other *words or concepts* that describe the American Political System or Democracy.

And its origins are commonly said to be in Ancient Athens or in Rome.

The usual History of the subject is totally secular.

But, Stanton Evans has written, "Such 'Democracy' is not what we are looking for here.

We are concerned with Models of Liberty and that is not what ancient Greece or in Imperial or Republican Rome provide.

That is because the concept of personal and social Freedom for all its Citizens is unknown and impossible in Nations which are controlled by an all-powerful King, Dictator or Regime which, by definition, must deny it.

Freedom requires a government that is limited to prevent it from becoming oppressive."

Evans goes on to insist that the Principles of both personal freedom and the concept of the limited State were known in Medieval Europe.

There we find the beginnings of

*

representative institutions,

*

popular sovereignty, *social contract,

*

elected Rulers,

*

limited Powers and

*

Government under Law.

What then is Freedom as such? There are those who define Freedom (or Liberty) simply as the supremacy of individual rights and personal freedoms in all matters, whether economic, personal, or social over and against any kind of authority. Many consider this individual liberty to be the basic moral principle of society.

WHAT IS FREEDOM or LIBERTY

Written by Calvin Fox

Thursday, 31 December 2015 16:15 - Last Updated Thursday, 31 December 2015 16:16

By this definition, "Freedom" is the ability of people to act voluntarily and without coercion. It is the liberty to act on one's own behalf.

However, there are corollaries to consider.

1. Since all people want this freedom of will or choice, there must be limits. Otherwise, one's freedom can become another person's oppression or loss of freedom

2. This potential conflict of interests requires an external authority to maintain reasonable freedom for everyone. That authority is Government

3. Government in turn must be subject to limits, i.e.- a Constitution. But that in itself does not guarantee Democracy or Freedom

4. There must be Law to maintain freedom, but what Law? More important, who or what determines the Law?

5. Furthermore, "freedom from" must become "freedom for" and that is the most important matter in a Democracy. What do we do with our freedom?

We are free to...?

Those are ethical questions.

6. Free people must share in common moral principles of right and wrong. These principles are the foundation of the Law.

This moral foundation is essential to ensure that freedom is used morally. What moral principles do Americans [or Egyptians or Palestinians, et al] hold in common? The Founders of America strongly believed that the moral character and virtue of the citizens is essential for Democracy. The latter depends upon it. And for the Founders, that moral character and virtue are derived from the Christian Faith or the Law of Nature's God.

Source: The Theme is Freedom by Stanton Evans

WHAT IS FREEDOM or LIBERTY

Written by Calvin Fox

Thursday, 31 December 2015 16:15 - Last Updated Thursday, 31 December 2015 16:16
