



God or Government

“Our Constitution was made only for a moral and religious people. It is wholly inadequate to the government of any other.”

Earlier, Paradigm made the statement that a spiritual more than a political awakening is needed to save the USA, to foster an environment that helps protect & nurture our children, our very future. See if you find the article below by Laura Hollis quite illuminating. Trust me, this is much bigger than the typical gun rights argument it seems to start out with.

Last week, New Mexico Gov. Michelle Lujan Grisham created a firestorm with an executive order suspending for 30 days the right to concealed or open carry of a firearm in Bernalillo County (where Albuquerque, the state’s most populated city, is located). In her order, Grisham declared gun violence to be a “public health emergency,” using recent fatal shootings as examples and citing statistics showing that gun violence is the leading cause of death for New Mexicans under age 19.

Possession of firearms has been lawful in the United States since the country was founded. And yet we did not have the problem with gun violence even just a few decades ago that we have now. Why aren’t we asking “why?” What has changed? We should be at least as interested in *explaining* the violence as we are in passing laws trying to prevent it.

Statistics actually provide a great deal of insight. First, in any given year, more than 50 percent of all gun-related deaths are suicides. This is profoundly relevant to Grisham’s concern for young people in her state (and throughout the country); according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), suicide has been the first or second leading cause of death for Americans under age 24 for the past quarter-century, and more than 50 percent of all suicides involve guns.

Homicide falls right behind, as the third leading cause of death in the same age demographic. The vast majority of gun homicides take place in our cities, perpetrated by young males using handguns that were acquired illegally.

In other words, we don’t have a “gun problem.” We have a *terrible* problem with our young people.

Ever-larger numbers of American youth suffer from depression, anxiety, or a sense of hopelessness that makes suicide look like a desirable option. And our cities—and prisons—are filled with those who have neither respect nor reverence for life—theirs or others’. Single parenthood, widespread divorce, broken homes, absent fathers, gang violence, and the sexualization of every aspect of young people’s lives—just to name a few societal trends—have taken a brutal toll.





Opponents of Grisham’s executive order and other gun control efforts point to the U.S. Constitution and claim that the rights enshrined therein are inviolate. And it is often said that the Constitution is grounded in principles found in Judeo-Christianity. Both statements are true, but they neglect a fundamental point: the role of Judeo-Christianity in the success of the American political experiment lies not in its manifestation within the federal or state governments, but in the manifestation of those beliefs and values in the everyday conduct of ordinary Americans.

This is what our second president, John Adams, meant when he said, “Our Constitution was made only for a moral and religious people. It is wholly inadequate to the government of any other.”

In other words, the liberties recognized and protected in the United States Constitution depend upon the *voluntary self-restraint* of its citizens.

What we have been seeing at least since the 1960s is the abandonment of self-restraint. Our most significant cultural institutions encourage irresponsible behavior: the entertainment industry actively promotes immediate gratification, self-absorption, greed, envy, violence, sexual promiscuity, and substance abuse. The media amplifies and glorifies these behaviors. The government subsidizes them.

In this climate, we cannot be shocked when those behaviors become more widespread. And the consequences therefrom have become appallingly costly, not only in terms of monies from the public coffers, but countless lives diminished or destroyed.

In addition to the heartbreaking statistics about suicide and homicide, 15–24-year-olds now consistently represent more than half of all cases of sexually transmitted diseases each year. Our cities are filled with homeless and mentally ill people, staggering or laying inert in substance-fueled stupors on streets filled with their urine and feces. Thieves steal from lawful businesses and break into cars in broad daylight, and our government looks the other way. Mobs loot and destroy and burn entire city blocks to the ground, while academics and analysts dismiss this behavior as legitimate protest for social ills. Criminals who commit violent physical and sexual assaults, including rape and attempted murder, are released on low bail or no bail. Parents are having to fight with school boards and administrators over the inclusion of sexually explicit materials in grade school curricula and libraries, while teachers argue on TikTok that they have the right to share intimate details of their sexual identities and preferences with their students.

In short, fewer Americans are willing to conform their behavior to established norms for purposes of preserving a civilized society. As the consequences of diminished self-restraint multiply, the calls for more *external* restraints—more and larger government—will increase.

It is foolish, therefore, to think that just because a “right” or liberty is placed in the Constitution, it will remain inviolate forever. Eventually, enough mayhem will have occurred that people will





clamor to amend the Constitution to restrict or even remove rights identified therein. One by one, the rights “guaranteed” by the Constitution will be taken away.

Whenever there are calls for a return to Judeo-Christian principles, the naysayers proclaim, “We don’t want a theocracy!”

Nor do I. The best assurance of our continuation as a free and prosperous nation is not our Constitution but our decisions. We as individuals can freely *choose* to restrain ourselves, relying upon the principles handed down by God. Or we can pretend to be “freer” by *ignoring* those principles. As we are witnessing right now, the increased government control that inevitably follows the resulting chaos will leave everyone much, much less free.

