

My Dear Son,

Today you become a man, not in my eyes mind you, but rather in the eyes of the law. You will have attained an age of legality with regard to many things from which you were forbidden while a minor. You will, as you well know because you have waited so long, be allowed to drive as an adult without restriction (without restriction of the state that is, remember it is my car). That is important to you, so do it, but do it well with respect for the law, other drivers and yourself. Be careful while driving.

Another thing you will be able to do for the first time - for the first time in your life - will be to vote in elections. I beg you do not take this responsibility lightly, for indeed it is one of the most important and deep-seated responsibilities that you will ever possess; and it is one of the most important trusts and liberties that a government will ever allow its people. Before you can vote though you must register to vote. Once registered, you should take it upon yourself to think of those rights and liberties that you enjoy under our Constitution, and under the declaration of Independence, and under the laws of God or Nature. Whether or not you partake in each and everyone of those other rights yourself mind you, you do enjoy the liberty to do so. Study them, determine what they mean to you and to others, and make sure to cast your future ballots for those who would protect our rights and liberties, and for those who would keep our great Nation free. Then make sure to vote in each and every national and local election. I do not ask you to do so, and though I cannot force you to vote, I will tell you it is one of the most important responsibilities you have as an adult citizen. By voting you and other voters are in effect shaping the government to some great degree.

It is my hope that you understand how important are our rights and liberties, and that you can decipher the difference between a right as opposed to a liberty. In essence a right is something to which we are entitled by Nature, or by Nature's God. It is something that another man cannot take away from us, and from the day we first take a breath into our lungs, until the day we last exhale our spirit from our body we have those rights. A liberty, on the other hand, is our ability to enjoy our rights through exercise of them. Liberties are oft time granted, then later abridged, cancelled, or out and out destroyed by government; rarely are they enhanced but this too under the eye of a trustful and wise government is sometimes done. Governments consist of people who are in control, to some extent or another, of men and women. In the United States of America governments servants are nothing more and nothing less than the servants of the People. Yes that means from the ditch digger on the civil service payroll, all the way to the president of the United States of America, these folks are the servants of the American people.

Let them remember it always. You are one of the people, and you are granted a right to vote, among others, and it is one of the most important rights you have. You are also granted the liberty to exercise that right, and no one should ever try to take that liberty from you. Every vote counts in our elections, do not allow anyone to ever convince you otherwise. Your vote, and the individually votes of Joe, Sally, Derek, Sam, Latisha, Jaime, Frantz, Agnieska, Julio, are all as important as each other; and when combined they can be a powerful tool that affects government to the core. There are other rights and

liberties that you and I, and all people of our Nation take pleasure in and often take granted of. I will remind you of some of these now, all as equally as important as your right to vote, though not all require you to take the responsibility to exercise them as does your right to vote. Remember that in my viewpoint - it is your absolute responsibility to vote, to form your government - but you have no responsibility to actually carry out these other rights - save one of the others which I will keep for last. Even though you need not exercise each of these other rights, you will probably soon realize, you do have a responsibility toward them in a form other than using them.

Among these other rights of which I speak are the inalienable rights to Life, Liberty, and the Pursuit of Happiness as written in our Declaration of Independence. You bear no responsibility to partake in these rights, yet rights they are, and of life you partake because you were born to it, and of that station you were assigned either by Nature or by God. Still though, you need not be responsible in Living; nor do you need to be such in In Pursuing Happiness or in Exercising Liberty, but let me warn you it is the fool who exercises these rights with wanton disregard to: Nation, morality, responsibility to family, fellow man, and self, and who only seeks their achievement through self satisfaction. You my son are no fool, so take heed of these words, take heed of these rights, and live your life, pursue your brand of happiness, and exercise your liberties wisely, with prudence, and with an eye toward morality be it based upon religious belief or simply upon the Natural order of the Universe.

Other precious rights we are granted are enumerated within The Declaration of Independence, The Constitution, and The Bill of Rights. We have the rights to: govern ourselves and our government is duty bound to protect our rights. We have the right to disband or overthrow such government when it fails to carry out its duties, with just regard, to protection of our rights. We have the right to defend ourselves, to wage war against they who would destroy us and our way of life, and our Great Nation. We have the right to become a part of our government through not only voting, but through military service (the one type of service I regret never having performed), civil service (the one to which I have devoted over 28 years of my life), and political service (the one in which I have the least interest of all). We have the rights to: Vote Without Paying a Poll Tax to Do So, to the right to be secure in the fact that our National Government will survive through Order Of Succession should the president be unable to complete his duties, and on and on and on. In addition we have the rights to/of: Freedom of Speech, Freedom Of The Press, Peaceful Assembly, Free Exercise of Religion, to Consent or Not as we please to Quarter Soldiers during time of peace, to be Secure in Our Persons, Papers and Homes from unreasonable search or seizure or arrest, to be Free of Self Incrimination if we so choose, to hearing by Grand Jury, to a Fair and Speedy Public Trial by a Jury of Our Peers in Criminal Cases, to Jury Trial in certain Civil Cases, to be assured we shall not suffer Cruel and Unusual Punishment under law. We also have the rights: To Remain Free from Slavery, To Be Equal Among the Two Sexes, to share equality and be equal among all the Races of Man, To Have Our Rights Protected from Abridgement by any State, and we have Other Civil Rights as well. And we have little known rights, little known among the common man: a Right to Retain Rights that were

Not Enumerated in the Constitution or Bill of Rights or within other documents, and a right to exercise rights on a State level and on the level of The People when such rights were not granted by the Constitution to the Federal Government (obviously these three entities were understood by the founding fathers to be three different things or why mention the three, in such a manner, in the same amendment). Furthermore, we have a right that requires the three branches of our own government to provide checks and balances, one branch against each of the others to assure a balanced adherence to, and interpretation of, our laws with justice for all. We also have the Right to Due process of Law to help protect all of our other rights to some degree, at least when the law and the government are just in its service of the People.

Our Guarantee of Rights, and our Exercise of Our Liberties are what make us the most free, and just, nation on the face of the earth. These rights and liberties are the reason that tens of millions have legally sought the American Dream, to come to our great land and to be treated equally as any other man; and this is good so long as they respect, abide by, and swear to protect the laws of the land (therefore my distaste for illegal aliens whose first act upon our soil is one of disrespect for and violation of the law). Did you note a very important thing that I just penned in the few lines directly above this one. There is a responsibility enunciated therein that is not only the responsibility of the Legal Immigrant, but is or also should be, the sacred oath (by God or Nature) of the Citizen of the United States of America. You have the inalienable responsibility, the incontrovertible task, to be duty bound to protect your Nation, her Declaration of Independence, her Constitution, her Bill of Rights, and the Rights and Liberties of her citizens, so that each and every citizen may within the law exercise these Rights and Liberties as they deem fit. Each and every of the Rights, Liberties, and Responsibilities enunciated within these documents, and otherwise held by the People, are your responsibility to defend. This is what now brings me to point out the one Right, and the Liberty to exercise said Right, that I not yet mentioned above. It is the one Right most important of all our Rights, and Liberty to exercise it goes beyond mere Liberty and raises it self to the height of duty; it is the Right that assures that we, the People, can stand strong to protect all of the others.

The Right to Keep and Bear Arms - essentially a right that shall not be infringed in order to secure the state by means of a well regulated militia - is the most sacred of them all. The second Amendment to the Constitution mentioned, but is not itself, as I see it, enumerate the actual right to keep and bear arms; although it does enunciate that this Right shall not be infringed. In other words the 2Nd Amendment does not spell out the Right To Keep and Bear Arms to make sure it is granted to the People. It mentions it, taking it as absolutely understood that it is a right of the People, but one in support support of other rights. Then the 2nd Amendment strengthens the Right To Keep And Bear Arms beyond the scope of all others, so that the other right mentioned within the same amendment, and our other rights will be protected. That amendment does not enumerate the right to keep and bear arms, it enumerates our right not to have that right infringed, this in order to forever assure that the People can, and will if needed, be able to form a Well Regulated Militia to defend our nation. Over the years this Amendment been one of the most controversial amendments to our Constitution.

Also, the right to Keep and Bear Arms has been and remains one of the most misunderstood and maligned rights, and one for which our Liberty is all too often and wrongfully restricted. Politicians often fear the power of the People as expressed in the 2nd Amendment. Why do they fear it? Well because at the time of our Founding Fathers there was limited use of the Militia, and I believe they envisioned that limited use may again someday become necessary. That very particular limited use consisted of protection of the People. The important thing though is from whom they were being protected. Sometimes the Militia faced off against Native Americans in bloody frays, other times against the troops of foreign governments, but the main use of the militia at the time the Declaration of Independence was written, the main use of it known up until the time the Constitution and Bill of Rights were penned, was as a tool of the People to protect themselves from excesses of an unjust government, and to cast off the chains that bound them to that government. This is why politicians today fear the 2nd Amendment above all other Amendments, and why they fear the Right of The People To Keep and Bear Arms above all Rights - they are the tools by which the People can and will if ever need be, overthrow an unjust government. The Militia was mainly seen, by our Founding Fathers, as the Power of the People to revolt against evil and unjust government. So, there is reason for unjust politicians today to fear these rights. There is also reason for the People, each and everyone of us, to cherish this right above all others, and that is because it and it alone gives the People (not the States, and not the Federal Government, but the Individuals of our Nation) the power - and note merely the hope - of being able to remain a: Government By The People, For The People And Of The People. Should it ever become evident that our government is not within that framework, a framework created by our Founding Fathers, then the Right to Keep and Bear Arms above all others will allow us to again speak out in words such as these:

"We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness. — That to secure these rights, Governments are instituted among Men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed, — That whenever any Form of Government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the Right of the People to alter or to abolish it, and to institute new Government, laying its foundation on such principles and organizing its powers in such form, as to them shall seem most likely to effect their Safety and Happiness."

Your Rights and Liberties are precious my son, guard them with all of your ability - with your life if need be - so that our great nation may not perish from this earth; and so that your children, and theirs after them, may enjoy it as did you and your fathers before you. I love you, and I love our great nation. I would, if need arise, lay down my life for you as I would for her. Long may our flag wave as a beacon of truth, justice and equality. Long may our Rights and Liberties be the draw that attracts those around the world who seek freedom, who seek justice, and who seek a better way of life. Lest we forget here at home just how valuable those rights are, I urge you to exercise them - especially the Right to Vote, and the Right to Keep and Bear Arms. I implore you, as you carry out your duty for

your country, be responsible for the protection of your rights and the rights of others - not just of family and friends, but of all Americans Citizens and legal Immigrants.

Today, the laws of our nation see you as a man. Yet I saw you as such some years back, when you missed that squirrel on your first hunt, and basically said: "There is always another day." I hope to always see you as such, as an optimist who enjoys his rights as an American Citizen, for the remainder of my days; and I hope your life is long, longer than mine, so that you own children and grandchildren, will someday see you in the same light as did I. But it is imperative for you to be a self made man, and for you to make yourself a real man, a good man, a moral man, and you do so only through the just and righteous accomplishment of your duty to keep the United States of America free, a Nation with a just government that respects the rights of her Citizens. It is up to you my son, you and others like you who love the freedoms we have made for ourselves to keep them safe from Tyranny, and to keep them bestowed upon 'We The People'. Live on now as a man, with my belssings, and with my hopes, that you will be a man who will do just that.

With all of my love and respect,

Papa