

In 1215, a defining document of human civilization was signed. The majority of the population previously had their rights and power suppressed. The citizens were taxed mercilessly and the policies made were insufficient and harmful. After centuries of exclusion, the residents had enough. They rose and threatened to rebel against the system that had oppressed them for so long. The king, sensing the looming crisis, agreed to sign the Magna Carta. That document established common law and was the first official document which held an official bound to laws and ensured the rights of their citizens. 560 years later, the Constitution of the United States was established, inspired by the Magna Carta. In the year 2019, it is the document representing the free world, establishing that all citizens have fundamental human rights that cannot be violated or taken away. The Constitution prevents the tyranny of the government when it protects free speech and the rights of the press.

The power the people have, more specifically the rights to free speech and the rights of the press, have been instrumental in making sure that is run by the people and working for the people. Corruption runs rampant globally, at times even in America. The government forfeits all credibility and authority when it does not serve the citizens or abuses the powers given. To prevent such actions, it's upon the citizens and press to exercise their rights to fix any loopholes and problems with the leaders or the government itself. The Watergate scandal is considered one of the worst abuses of power a leader has taken in America. Former President Nixon grossly abused his power when his men broke into and wiretapped the Democratic National Committee in 1972. The journalists in the Washington Post exposed the event and had checked the power of the government. Milestones in history such as African Americans and women receiving the right to vote happened due to their right of free speech and right to petition. When there is a limit to free speech, there is far more difficulty in ensuring these laws and rights are passed. The Founding Fathers had known that morals and values change over time and that no document can withstand centuries passing by without society evolving and changing. Our laws should reflect the culture that America goes through, and the elasticity of the Constitution allows for this.

Globally, there are places where the very thought or action contrary to the government's can result in incarceration. For all of America's flaws, the right to free speech allows us to confront our country's defects. America would be far more suppressed and citizens would be taken advantage of if we didn't have the right to free speech. Revolutionaries such as Martin Luther King Jr., Susan B. Anthony, and Harvey Milk changed the way we see the world. Their words and actions inspired new generations to raise their voice and fight for their rights. For America, at its core, is the leader of the world.