

Rewriting Amendment Number One

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Should the People once wondered — perhaps not very seriously — whether falsely shouting “Fire!” in a theater and telling hit men “Here’s \$50,000; you will get the rest when you finish the job” count as speech that should be protected as a matter of right.

They do not.

And it’s not so puzzling that freedom to exercise a legitimate right does not entail license to violate the rights of others.

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But some people are eager to prohibit us from uttering statements that don’t come within twenty parsecs of such alleged quandaries. These censorious ones include big-tech firms and big DC politicians like, for example, U.S. Senator Richard Blumenthal, a bully urging



social-media firms to crack down harder on the speech of “antivax’ groups.”

Such persons seem to think that the First Amendment as presently worded, at least the part protecting freedom of speech, is a big dumb mistake. What would they like it to say instead?

Maybe:

“Congress shall make no law abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press, unless a would-be speaker wishes to dispute government-endorsed or Google-Twitter-Facebook-Amazon-endorsed conclusions about medicine, vaccines, pandemics, masks, lockdowns, transgenderism, euthanasia, abortion, or election fraud; to spend ‘too much’ money on campaign speech; to utter ‘hate speech’ about chess pieces; to speak freely; etc.”

But then the First Amendment would be about as valuable as yesterday’s toilet paper as a bulwark against tyranny.

Don’t flush our freedom of speech.

This is Common Sense. I’m Paul Jacob.