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Harris Campaign Mantra - Freedom - What it Means to Me as a Jewish Mother

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When I hear the word “freedom” it stirs in me historical memories of my ancestors struggling for a breath of oxygen amidst the miasmic fumes of persecution, which has been compounded by the post October 7 climate of virulent Jew-hatred around the world. But it stirs in me something much deeper. You see, for nearly forty years I have been fielding suicide calls from mothers in the Jewish community and elsewhere. These are normal, healthy mothers who have been beaten and scarred in violent marriages.

But their affliction does not end there – in fact, it gets worse. They have lost their children too. They habitually beg family court judges to protect their children from their unstable and substance-abusing ex-spouses, but are punished instead with the loss of custody, and often all visitation privileges. These vulnerable children living with violent fathers are wounded and, sometimes, killed. The mothers have been at pains to explain to the judge the dangers posed to their children when living with an abusive father. But the judges blithely ignore their pleas. These mothers cut across red states, blue states, and battleground states. For them, the word “freedom” resonates far beyond the autonomous control over one’s body.

Looking toward Vice President Kamala Harris and presumptive Democratic Party’s nominee to be their voice, mothers grieving for their children that have been seized by the family court will gladly cast their vote for the candidate that will help them. Harris may be in an excellent position to free these mothers from the bondage of family court – where tyrannical judges have routinely issued rulings that eviscerate the mother from the lives of her children when the father is menacing and controlling. As the second most powerful member of the Biden administration, Harris can call in the US Department of Justice to investigate the rampant civil rights violations of mothers, the corrupt visitation-center businesses that have nested in the family courts to prey upon innocent mothers, and the penetration of child-sex trafficking and illegal drug trade into the family courts.

Because the family courts are now criminally dysfunctional these atrocious cases are no longer an outlier or an anomaly. On the contrary, mothers systematically and predictably lose their children to fierce and ferocious ex-husbands. In fact, in Maryland last spring, an honorable family court judge who chose a loving mother over a violent father was murdered in his driveway when he came home to his family that evening after having ruled in the mother’s favor earlier that day. That sent a cold chill throughout the family court system that if a judge denies custody to a substance-abusing, alcoholic, and violent father they are verily putting their own life at risk. Truly, how many judges would be martyrs for mothers? Not many, because few are willing to put their own lives on the line. And this results haplessly in mothers losing their children by the droves to violent, aggressive, and controlling ex-spouses and ex-partners.

The media, the public, the politicians are aware of the hijacking of the family courts by a venal culture. Time has run out. Major television networks and print media around the world recently covered the tragic story of three-year-old Ellie Obi Lorenzo who was killed while on a visit with her father, and subsequently tossed into a San Francisco Bay Area recycling center. This tragedy was preventable. The mother, Dr. Chrystal Obi, a Stanford Clinical Instructor in Pediatric Radiology, had implored the court over a two-year custody dispute to order supervised visitation for the father because of his “increasingly erratic” behavior, according to court papers filed by the mother.

Ironically, while courts blithely dismiss mothers’ pleas for supervised visitation between the child and the dangerous father, they impose these restrictions on the mother instead. In every state there are mothers at this moment plunged into credit card debt because they are assessed hefty fees by visitation centers that contract with the court. They pay hourly rates, in addition to orientation fees and for the monthly reports the visitation center sends to the judge. These court-contracting visitation centers have become a thriving business nesting in our nation’s family courts. In this unbalanced system where a mother, instead of the dangerous father, is imprisoned by visitation supervision this clearly represents a violation of her rights to equal protection under the laws as guaranteed by the Fourteenth Amendment.

Freedom is at the basis of a mother’s right to protect her child from harm. Harris has most definitely struck a chord in her rallying cry for “freedom” for women across America. Reproductive freedom is vitally important. But freedom is also important for those who have already reproduced. Therefore, mothers trapped in draconian family courts must be freed by a Justice Department intervention forthwith. Harris will win the hearts of mothers forever – and will gain their votes even in the toughest states. As a Jewish mother, I want to see “freedom” for all the mothers in America by bringing the children back to them. For me, that will make the Harris campaign mantra – freedom — a precious gift.

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