

2018 Brings New Challenges and Hope for Persecuted Believers

As a new year begins, it's the perfect time to reflect on where we've been and the hope for tomorrow and the new year to come.

Thanks to the continued support of ACLJ members like you, 2017 was a very important and impactful year in our continuing quest to defend the rights and liberties of all Americans. We have achieved numerous victories for life, national security and persecuted Christians. Here are just a few of this year's victories that you helped make possible.

After many years of litigation against the Internal Revenue Service (IRS), this year we achieved a significant victory. The IRS admitted it discriminated against conservative groups on the basis of their beliefs and apologized for its deplorable behavior. Even more important, we obtained a court order preventing the IRS from ever again discriminating against conservative groups for their beliefs. Here's how one law professor in *The Washington Post* described the impact we've had on the IRS bureaucracy: "They've been burned. They've been hammered. They've been bludgeoned. ... They're trying to survive."

At the United Nations, we stood up in defense of Israel—our most important ally in the Middle East. We took direct action at the U.N General Assembly urging world leaders to stand against the BDS Movement (Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions). We were able to put a spotlight on the U.N.'s anti-Semitic and anti-Israel agenda and defended Israelis against a \$34.5 billion lawsuit brought by terrorist sympathizers in U.S. federal court.

Here at home, we exposed the lies and corruption of the deep state. We uncovered troubling new information about the secretive actions of former Attorney General Loretta Lynch. We forced the FBI to release fired FBI Director Comey's draft memos exonerating Hillary Clinton before even interviewing her or other key witnesses. Through our work in filing Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) requests—and going to court when necessary—we unearthed critical information necessary to hold the FBI, the DOJ and the State Department bureaucracies accountable for blatantly lying not only to us, but also to the American people.

The new year brings new challenges. Big Abortion will continue to peddle its ideology of death. The deep state bureaucrats will keep manipulating Washington. Israel will continue to be under attack at the U.N. And, the global persecution of Christians rages on.

And I'm delighted to report that in the year ahead, we are mobilizing to counter these very real and dangerous threats to our lives, our freedoms and our way of life.

We are determined to stop Big Abortion. We have two pro-life cases pending before the United States Supreme Court. In the first case, California has tried to compel pro-life pregnancy centers to advertise abortion services. However, the state does not have the right to compel anyone to advertise murdering the unborn.

In the second case, the National Abortion Federation has tried to censor incriminating videos of abortionists haggling over the price of baby body parts—actually bargaining about the price of lungs, hearts and other vital organs. Big Abortion is even trying to prevent law enforcement from obtaining this evidence. The Supreme Court has ordered the National Abortion Federation to respond to our cert petition in just a matter of weeks.

Our battle against the deep state intensifies. We still have more than 20 active FOIA requests—seeking vital information from the FBI, DOJ, NSA and State Department bureaucracies. We face a number of critical court deadlines in the weeks and months ahead. With your help, we will defeat the deep state.

The need to stand with Israel is now more important than ever. The U.N. refuses to accept the reality that Jerusalem is truly the capital of Israel. At the same time, the Palestinian Authority continues to align itself with terrorists and wage lawfare against Israel at the International Criminal Court (ICC). Further, Hezbollah, Hamas and ISIS continue their reign of terror in the region. In 2018, we will defend the State of Israel at the U.N. and ICC and work to aggressively counter the ongoing anti-Israel assault underway by radical terrorists in many parts of the world.

Asia Bibi, a Pakistani Christian, remains on death row for her simple act of Christian charity: giving a Muslim coworker a cup of water while they worked in the fields. She has spent more than seven years away from her husband and five children. Pastor Andrew Brunson, a U.S. citizen, remains, for yet another year, in a Turkish prison on trumped-up charges. Worse still, Christians in the Middle East face genocide at the hands of radical Islamic terrorists as ISIS and its allies continue their jihad against our faith and way of life. Yet, we remain ready to advocate for those who live and fight for their Christian faith. This year we helped free two Christian pastors from possible death sentences in Sudan and defended an elderly Pakistani Christian woman persecuted for her faith. In 2018, we will continue the fight to free the oppressed—to stop the slaughter of Christians around the globe.

We promise to do all that we can—in this country and abroad—to stop the genocide of Christians. The persecution must end.

As a nation and as Christians, we have a good deal to be thankful for in 2017. And we know with the Lord's blessing, we

will continue to achieve great results at the ACLJ—through our legal work, our legislative expertise, and our powerful media outreach.

But most of all, as we face a new year, I want to thank you—those who have stood with us at the ACLJ—those who are supporting our work through prayer and generous giving. I also want to assure you that we can do even more in 2018. Together—as a powerful team.

As the new year begins, I want you to know that we remain committed to safeguarding freedom and human dignity—here at home and abroad.

With the challenges ahead, I cannot help but reflect on the words of the Lord spoken by the Prophet Jeremiah in Jeremiah 29:11, “For I know the plans that I have for you, says the Lord, plans for peace and not for evil, to give you a future and a hope.

On behalf of the entire ACLJ family, I want to wish you and yours a very Happy New Year.

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