

0aoKg [Free PDF File] Corruption in America: From Benjamin Franklin's Snuff Box to Citizens United

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For two centuries, the Framers' ideas about political corruption flourished in the courts, even in the absence of clear rules governing voters, civil officers, and elected officials. In the 1970s, the U.S. Supreme Court began to narrow the definition of corruption, and the meaning has since changed dramatically. No case makes that clearer than Citizens United. In 2010, one of the most consequential Court decisions in American political history gave wealthy corporations the right to spend unlimited money to influence elections. Justice Anthony Kennedy's majority opinion treated corruption as nothing more than explicit bribery. With unlimited spending transforming American politics for the worse, Citizens United was not just bad law but bad history. Corruption in America clearly shows that if the American experiment in self-government is to have a future, then we must revive the traditional meaning of corruption and embrace an old ideal.

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