Q65 – What are three rights of everyone living in the United States?

DOUGLAS GINSBURG, Federal Judge, U.S. Court of Appeals, D.C. Circuit:
Everyone living in the United States has the rights guaranteed by the Constitution. To name but a few: The right to worship as you please, or not at all. The right to complain to elected officials. The right to trial by jury.

The right upon which so many other rights depends is, of course, freedom of speech. It means that no government official can punish you or censor you for what you say, with few exceptions – such as slander or libel, treason, or inciting a riot.
Sometimes the courts have to define free speech – as when the Supreme Court decided in 1990 that burning the American flag is symbolic speech protected by the Constitution.
As is so often said, we don't need a First Amendment for popular speech. We need it to protect unpopular speech. It's hard to tolerate speech you despise – but how else is your own speech to be safeguarded? Shutting down speech just exposes your own weakness: That you can't outsell others in the marketplace of ideas.