

While Evils are Sufferable



By Paul Engel

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- The colonies would only put up with the evils coming out of London for so long. How long with the states suffer the evils coming out of Washington, D.C.?
- As Abraham Lincoln said, We the people are the rightful masters of both Congress and the courts.
- Are the evils we see every day still sufferable? Or will We the People finally get our states to stand up for our rights?

For the last two years I have been showing you how much our current government in Washington, D.C. is acting exactly as King George III did back in the 18th century. While King George's actions led the colonies to declare independence, the states have not shown themselves as willing to defend their rights and those of their citizens now. Why is that? I think the answer can be found in the Declaration of Independence:

all experience hath shewn, that mankind are more disposed to suffer, while evils are sufferable, than to right themselves by abolishing the forms to which they are accustomed.

[Declaration of Independence](#)

Could it be that all of the evils coming out of the federal government are still sufferable? Are the people willing to suffer the ruling of judges, the monarchical actions of the President, and Congress acting more like a House of Lords than the representative body it was created to be? Apparently they

are. How long will this train of abuses have to grow before we throw out those in this tyrannical government and restore not only our independence, but justice and liberty? What will it take for us to learn the truth of what Abraham Lincoln said:

We the people are the rightful masters of both Congress and the courts, not to overthrow the Constitution but to overthrow the men who pervert the Constitution.

Abraham Lincoln

The phrase “disposed to suffer, while evils are sufferable” reminds me of New York City in the late 80s to early 90s. When my family moved out of the city in 1975, things were bad. Times Square was a drug infested cesspool, 42nd Street was full of prostitutes, and there were parts of Central Park where families just didn’t walk. For 20 years after we left, things only got worse. The people kept electing the same type of representation to city government, probably because their evils were still sufferable. Finally, they had enough, and elected someone with a different way of governing: Rudy Giuliani. As Mayor, Mr. Giuliani changed how the police treated crime, how the city provided services, and how people viewed the city. This led to a renaissance for the city, with lower crime, cleaner subways, and more tourism.

The examples of people righting themselves by fixing their government, first by declaring themselves independent from Great Britain and then by New York City electing a different type of mayor, should be an example to us today. As recent elections have shown, people in this country appear more willing to suffer evil than to right themselves. Yet I fear the unrest of those who are unwilling to suffer any more under the tyrannical acts coming out of Washington, D.C., will one day lead some to do more than alter our form of government, but to abolish it altogether.

Declaring Independence

Let's back up a minute. Through the 1760s and 1770s the colonists suffered many injustices at the hand of King George and the British Parliament. They tried to negotiate with their tormentors, but to no avail. On the few occasions that when Parliament relented, they simply replaced one injustice with another. The colonies sent delegates to the Continental Congress for several reasons, among them, to find relief from British oppression. Finally, it became obvious to at least one of the delegates, Richard Henry Lee from Virginia, that enough was enough. He proposed that the colonies declare independence.

Resolved, That these United Colonies are, and of right ought to be, free and independent States, that they are absolved from all allegiance to the British Crown, and that all political connection between them and the State of Great Britain is, and ought to be, totally dissolved.

[Lee Resolution \(1776\)](#)

While the delegates conferred with their colonies about the Lee Resolution, it was apparent that the resolution would pass. Therefore the Continental Congress formed the "Committee of Five", to draft a statement for when that happened. The opening paragraph of the Declaration of Independence explains its purpose.

The unanimous Declaration of the thirteen united States of America, When in the Course of human events, it becomes necessary for one people to dissolve the political bands which have connected them with another, and to assume among the powers of the earth, the separate and equal station to which the Laws of Nature and of Nature's God entitle them, a decent respect to the opinions of mankind requires that they should declare the causes which impel them to the separation.

[Declaration of Independence](#)

The committee consisted of John Adams of Massachusetts, Roger

Sherman of Connecticut, Benjamin Franklin of Pennsylvania, Robert R. Livingston of New York, and Thomas Jefferson of Virginia, who drafted the document. Once the committee agreed on the language, it went to the full congress for final changes and publication.

Modern Independence

In many ways the States today are in a similar situation to the colonies in 1776. For years the government of the United States has not only been infringing on the rights of the people, but on the States as well, though there are some very significant differences. Most significant of all is that the states are sovereign, while the colonies were not.

While the colonies were creations of the British government, the states had declared themselves free and independent, then fought and won a war to confirm it. The colonies, including their governments, were formed with charters under the British crown, while the states were formed by the people and the governments created by their own constitutions. Furthermore, the states created the government of the United States when they ratified its constitution. As the progenitor of the United States, the states not only hold themselves sovereign above their creation, but only subjected themselves to the powers they had delegated to it.

The powers not delegated to the United States by the Constitution, nor prohibited by it to the States, are reserved to the States respectively, or to the people.

Amendment X

This means when the colonies declared themselves independent, they were committing a rebellion.

An open and avowed renunciation of the authority of the government to which one owes allegiance;

Rebellion – Webster's 1828 Dictionary

However, when the states stand up against the overreach of the government of the United States, not only is this not rebellion, insurrection, or treason, but the support of the supreme law of the land.

This Constitution, and the Laws of the United States which shall be made in Pursuance thereof; and all Treaties made, or which shall be made, under the Authority of the United States, shall be the supreme Law of the Land;

U.S. Constitution, Article VI, Clause 2

As such, both Thomas Jefferson and James Madison recognized not only the power of the states to rein in the United States government, but as their duty.

That this Assembly doth explicitly and peremptorily declare, that it views the powers of the federal government, as resulting from the compact to which the states are parties; as limited by the plain sense and intention of the instrument constituting that compact; as no farther valid than they are authorised by the grants enumerated in that compact, and that in case of a deliberate, palpable and dangerous exercise of other powers not granted by the said compact, the states who are parties there-to have the right, and are in duty bound, to interpose for arresting the progress of the evil, and for maintaining within their respective limits, the authorities, rights and liberties appertaining to them.

Virginia Resolutions

In the face of all of this, why do the states remain under the thumb of the government in Washington, D.C. when it goes beyond its legitimate powers? I believe there are several reasons, including both a poor civics education and a serious lack of backbone.

On the rare occasions when the Constitution is taught in schools, they teach around the document and not what it actually says. They cover some of the names and the dates, even a little of what it does, but they don't teach what the supreme law of the land actually says. Even law schools teach judicial opinions rather than the Constitution. I've asked dozens of attorneys if, while in law school, did they study the Constitution or constitutional law? Over the years I have been performing this informal poll, only one person has said they studied the Constitution; the rest studied the opinion of judges, euphemistically called "constitutional law". Since so many politicians start out as lawyers, or at least have an education from a law school, is it any wonder they know little of what the document they take an oath to support actually says?

Let's face it, as much as it may make our skin crawl to consider it, politicians are human. That means they naturally tend to do all they can to avoid pain. Why should a politician stand up and support a position unpopular with their peers? After all, it's not like the people they represent would be willing to stand beside them, is it? Why should any politician buck their party leadership if the people they represent are more likely to vote for whomever their party prefers? We the People have effectively removed the spin of anyone who makes it to high elected office by teaching them throughout their political career that the way to get re-elected is to say the right things and keep the checks and programs flowing. When was the last time you asked a candidate when they supported the Constitution and it cost them something? If we don't make constitutional fidelity as a standard for elected office, why should those in office?

Conclusion

It appears that Americans today are willing to suffer much more than our predecessors. As I've documented over the last two Independence Days, the grievances we have today against

Washington, D.C. not only match, but far exceed those the colonists had against the crown in 1776. Yet here we are, disposed to suffer. The colonies were abolishing their form of government, yet in America today, all we need to do is alter those in government. Yet even that seems to be too much for We the People. Instead, election after election we keep doing the same thing, hoping against hope that this time it will be different. That was Einstein's definition of insanity. Perhaps it's not the patriot, the constitutional scholar, or the one fighting for their rights that's crazy. Perhaps it's the rest of the country, blindly placing their hope in some individual to free them from this doom. Maybe it's just that the evils have not gotten evil enough for us to oppose them. Or could it be that We the People have become so enfeebled by our dependence on government that we prefer subjugation to liberty?

The disorders and miseries which result gradually incline the minds of men to seek security and repose in the absolute power of an individual; and sooner or later the chief of some prevailing faction, more able or more fortunate than his competitors, turns this disposition to the purposes of his own elevation, on the ruins of public liberty.

Washington's Farewell Address 1796

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