

Who are we? Why are we not who we were?

Part 1: Who we were starting out as a young nation

Preeminent historian Bromwell Ault speaks to us from eight decades of observing the trajectory of America. He speaks about what we were and how we lost our way.

Could you give us an understanding of our predicament in the history of nations Mr. Ault?

“Political America for most of our history has been not only a place to live,” said Ault. “But also a state of mind and way of life derived from our Plymouth Rock to Independence Hall origins; and from our Constitution’s guidance of our nation’s and continent’s development.

“Inevitably, the telling of our national tale must inspire reverence in those who love and understand the basis for what we have undertaken and accomplished.

“That reverence is lacking in the way many Americans view their country today and, most importantly, beneath the dome in DC where it should be most notable. There, it has mostly been discarded and replaced with attitudes and actions more suited to today’s political temper and pace.

“The truth is, although political truth is increasingly hard to come by, that we have drifted so far from our founders’ principles that we do not have a government that they would recognize. Actually, it is somewhat of a stretch to even refer to what we have as “government”. This criticism cuts both ways – against those elected to office and against those who elect them.

“What do we have? Tough question, and sometimes it’s difficult

to describe exactly what our government is composed of and how it works.

“What Washington reveals is a steadily expanding mixture of agencies, bureaus, departments, of boards, committees, and other initiatives that form the structure of our federal bureaucracy. These entities have been formed over time by legislation created by Congress theoretically to respond to the needs of the public. They are rarely terminated and, therefore, accumulate.

“Only Congress can create legislation and only Congress can provide the means of funding the laws it passes. Some laws work their way through the multiple levels and committees of the approval process on their own; others are given guidance and support by the executive branch and/or other interested parties such as the Depts. of Defense and Justice, labor unions, religious groups, etc. And lobbyists representing every possible interest are within instant reach. In their present number and intensity they have been present for only about three decades. Today they constitute what many DC insiders see as a fourth branch of government.

“Once enabling legislation has been passed, it must cross over one of government’s greatest divides – from legislation to implementation, and, in order to make this transition, either new managing bodies must be created and funded, or the new programs must be inserted into existing ones.

“Congress’ task is then mostly done. Space will be found; staff will be hired and counsel retained; plans will be announced; funds will be transferred; and operations will commence. With only minor variations this is the way our government has grown so immensely over the past half century.

“One such variation, commencing with Pres. Clinton, is the increasing use of Executive Orders (EO) whereby some purposes and projects can be added to the bureaucratic mix without

Congressional passage. Over time, these primarily political actions have served to strengthen the President's hand.

"To put this increase in perspective, consider that FDR issued 11 executive orders over his thirteen years in office. The following nine presidents from Truman through Bush I used their E0 power 30 times over 47 years.

"But then look at what follows. Clinton issued 15, Bush II 62 and Obama, with months remaining in his presidency is reported by various sources to have issued between 200 and 900.

"It is not, however, just the growing frequency and number that are of concern. Some EOs can't within the existing structure of our government and require nothing more than an additional effort or new direction from personnel and funding resources already in place.

"Others are bolder and more extensive in their purpose, which often is only revealed after the order has been signed, so that with the quickness of a pen stroke and in the privacy of the Oval Office, regulations can be put in place that both serve the White House's political purposes and expand the bureaucracy by additional hiring and funding requirements.

"It is evident from the scale of E0 use practiced by Clinton, Bush II and Obama that the concept and intention of the E0 has changed dramatically; and, rather than being used for rare, specific or emergency purposes, it has quietly become just another political tool the use and acceptance of which provides an effective way for the president to bypass Congress."

Thus, a breakdown of our Republic into another form of government by our corporate elites.

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