

The last gasp of liberty

Many Americans have come to regard the presidency of Donald J. Trump as the Alamo - the place and time where liberty will make its last stand to protect our constitutional republic and our American values. Granted, many or most of the Americans who feel this way are Conservatives and supporters of our Constitution, but that does not change the facts. It does, however, highlight the ideological schism that exists in our country - one that has come to be known as the last shining star in the firmament of governance once dominated by monarchs and dictators.

Perhaps one of the most famous quotes about democracy is ascribed to Sir Winston Churchill, "Many forms of Government have been tried, and will be tried in this world of sin and woe. No one pretends that democracy is perfect or all-wise. Indeed it has been said that democracy is the worst form of Government except for all those other forms that have been tried from time to time." We know that shortened version as, "Democracy is the worst form of government...except for all the others." Long form or short form, nobody has better articulated the difficulty of preserving or implementing democracy than Churchill who first uttered it in the House of Commons on November 11, 1947.

It is perhaps ironic that it would be the Prime Minister of a country whose monarchy had ruled over us that would extol the virtues of the one thing that lost them their colonial possessions - a demand for liberty and self-governance. But he did, and so have many world leaders and ordinary people since then. Ask any one of the million or so new immigrants we welcome every year if they are pleased to be here and you will probably get the same one-word response, "yes." Given our long history of immigration, it is therefore strange to see the rise of pro-illegal immigration groups that are only too ready to condemn our country's policies, advocate for open borders or a return of much of our land to Mexico (by the 'reconquista' movement).

Ask any dyed-in-the-wool Texan who knows history how he feels about that possibility. He'll probably tell you that Texas will be happy to do so right after Mexico gives back its whole country to the Spaniards, the Aztecs and the Mayans and when Austria, Germany and Hungary give back their territory to the House of Hapsburg. Democracy is also messy, and it sometimes leads to war, but it also leads to treaties and legitimate land purchases like the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo in 1848 when we got 525,000 square miles of land that now make up all or parts of present-day Arizona, California, Colorado, Nevada, New Mexico, Utah and Wyoming. Add to that, the Gadsden Purchase of 29,670 more square miles from Mexico, finalized in 1854, which allowed for the completion of the transcontinental railroad, and you can see that wars and treaties have consequences.

The Left is populated by practitioners of the ancient art of wishful thinking and the modern art of guerilla street-fighting. They represent the *loyal opposition* to democracy that could only exist WITHIN a democratic system! Given the opportunity, however, they would happily upend our constitutional republic's appletart and let the apples of democracy and liberty be strewn on the ground and allowed to rot there. These are not patriotic partisans of the people's will. They are soldiers of fortune - mercenaries - who will work with or for anyone willing to join their cause of stripping the individual of his Constitutional rights and transferring them to government.

Make no mistake, people who would give you security in exchange for your liberty are not your friends. Ben Franklin said it best, "Those who would give up essential liberty, to purchase a little temporary safety, deserve neither liberty nor safety." Transfers of power under duress or by subterfuge are not rooted in liberty, and those advocating such transfers are quite simply the enemies of our country and must be regarded as such. The theft of independent thought and individual choice is a capital crime. Our 'Alamo' is under siege. The Left's unwillingness to allow the President to secure our southern border is political hostage-taking, and it flies in the face of their oath of office.

That oath is worth repeating here: "I do solemnly swear (or affirm) that I will support and defend the Constitution of the United States against all enemies, foreign and domestic; that I will bear true faith and allegiance to the same; that I take this obligation freely, without any mental reservation or purpose of evasion; and that I will well and faithfully discharge the duties of the office on which I am about to enter: So help me God."

To deny a duly-elected president the power to exercise his constitutional obligation as required by law and outlined in Article 2. of the Constitution is in direct conflict with their (Congress') responsibility under Article 1., section 8 of the Constitution: "...and provide for the common defence and general welfare of the United States." The current partial government shutdown, which has now exceeded one month in duration, is the first shot fired by the Democrats in their battle to retake the Presidency in 2020 as well as continue to re-shape America in their image. They should be careful, however, not to underestimate the resolve of the inhabitants of the Alamo at 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue. Their knives are long and sharp.

Stephan Helgesen is a former career U.S. diplomat who lived and worked in thirty different countries, specializing in export promotion. He is now a political analyst and strategist and author of over 900 articles and nine books on politics, the economy and social trends. He can be reached at: stephan@stephanhelgesen.com