

I don't recognize my country anymore

The other day I was reading a poster on a wall with the Bill of Rights prominently displayed. Of course, most Americans who were NOT a product of the last 20 years or so of public education, could probably just about recite verbatim the words of the first and second amendments to the Constitution, but I guess I had not paid that much attention to the other eight. By reading them all, what glaringly stands out is how far wrong this country has gone. Let me rephrase that: how wrong we Americans have allowed our government to go.

Soldiers quartering in our houses without our permission doesn't seem to be much of an issue these days, so the third amendment just doesn't get one very excited, but 4, 5, 6 and 8 stand out as a damning reminder how our government is way out of line, in many areas. To keep this brief, double jeopardy in 7 and people and states' rights in 9 and 10, although possibly germane, will not be examined here.

Let me first explain why this is such a passionate issue for me. For 23 years I served in the United States Marine Corps. I also spent four years at the United States Naval Academy. In those years I recited a pledge, or oath, at various times. When I first arrived at the Academy, and every time that I was promoted, or when I presided over a re-enlistment or promotion of a junior service member, I recited an oath: "to support and defend the CONSTITUTION of the United States against all enemies, foreign and domestic.....and that I take this obligation freely, without any mental reservation or purpose of evasion, SO HELP ME GOD." Congressmen and presidents take a very similar oath. So, why is it that, upon taking this oath, so many fail to abide by it?

The fourth amendment requires that officials with the desire/need to search and seize property belonging to the people must obtain a warrant supported by probable cause and sworn to by that official. Now just recently, one of President Trump's attorneys, John Eastman, was accosted and manhandled by FBI agents and ordered to hand over his cell phone and produce evidence on that phone for a warrant requested by a congressional committee. It was televised and it was very clear in this clip that a warrant was not produced until after the phone was physically removed from Mr. Eastman's possession. In another instance, FBI agents raided the home of James O'Keefe, and with a warrant, searched his home for a diary of President Biden's daughter that was supposedly illegally obtained. (How ANYONE'S diary, regardless of how embarrassing the contents, rises to the level of interest of the Federal Bureau of Investigation is breathtaking) Can anyone reading this imagine calling the FBI out to investigate someone who may have found your daughter's diary, and making that plea to a judge to justify a warrant? And many an FBI official swore to the legitimacy of damning evidence of President Trump's collusion with Russia to obtain FISA warrants, every one illegitimately and probably illegally.

Article 5 states: "No person shall be held to answer for a capital, or otherwise infamous crime, unless on a presentment or indictment of a Grand Jury, except in cases arising in the land or naval forces, or in the Militia.....nor be deprived of life, liberty, or property, without due process of law..." Now, maybe being held in a D.C. jail wouldn't be considered being 'held' since the accommodations are so pleasant, but I think the 60, or maybe many more, participants in the January 6, 2021 rally at the Capitol being held in that jail and others, sometimes in solitary confinement, would argue the point. ALL of those prisoners are being held without being charged by the Capitol police, much less a Grand Jury. They are being held unlawfully and it would seem that very few Americans, much less elected officials, are concerned that the Constitution is being violated by those who took an oath to defend it. This is the most obvious travesty of justice, but there are many others, Peter Navarro and Roger Stone to name a couple.

Now Article 6 is even more illustrative of how much this government has abrogated its responsibility to abide by the Constitution. How speedy is it to rot in jail without being charged with a crime for 18 months? A speedy and public trial is a RIGHT guaranteed by the 6th Amendment to our Constitution, and there is no justification for keeping these citizens locked up for so long

without a trial and without even a charge. Every lawmaker and law enforcement official overseeing this travesty should be in jail in the place of those citizens.

Finally, the 8th Amendment guarantees that excessive bail, excessive fines and cruel and unusual punishment (filthy DC jail and solitary confinement) shall not be imposed or inflicted. The, then candidate for, and now, inept Vice President paid the bail for real rioters and looters during the summer of 2020. Those hoodlums used the police abuse that ended in the death of Saint George Floyd as an excuse to destroy numerous cities and injure and kill dozens. And now the dozens of citizens, some not guilty of any crime, save trespass of the capitol, are not allowed ANY bail, and the cruel punishment is included in the speedy pretrial confinement.

We now have a Justice Department that makes criminals and terrorists of parents protesting school boards about inappropriate curriculum and unnecessary mandates while ignoring gross and plainly obtainable evidence of illegal activity and graft committed by the President's son. The FBI, part of that department, even provided made-up evidence for Nancy Pelosi to twice frivolously impeach a sitting president and hound him for four years of his administration.

The Constitution means something to me, and obviously doesn't mean a thing to our government officials. When we pledge allegiance to our flag, what we are really honoring is the Constitution that it represents. Having a country, our United States, means nothing without that almost 250 year-old document that doesn't give us rights, but protects our rights given to us by God.

On my first deployment overseas, I was introduced to the military Code of Conduct. As we were deployed as a combat unit, not a love boat cruise, things became more serious from the relatively mundane training we had all been required to complete before the real deal. I will admit here that I never saw combat, but we were ready. All of us memorized this code and were tested on it regularly. It stated, in part: I am an American Fighting Man, I serve in the forces that guard my country and our way of life, I am prepared to give my life in their defense. As I consider that our country hardly resembles the country I served just a generation or two before, I'm not sure I want to make that pledge today.

Robert Coburn, Marine, Patriot, Christian