

BETTER LEADERS, BETTER GOVERNMENT

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Today, politicians and pundits argue about policy with little or no consideration as to whether leaders in Congress with a different mix in values and unencumbered by Beltway culture would better serve America.

James Madison, following the submission of the Constitution to the several states, reminded the Nation that its future depended on the election of wise and virtuous leaders. Yet, today, everyone acknowledges our government is broken, our leadership is bereft of the values which permit harmony and a reverence for the process of government, and the political bands which hold us together have been rearranged.

The reason for this is that the aggregate virtues of our elected representatives have been diluted by the weaknesses of human nature. These weaknesses have replaced doing what is right for the Nation with doing what is right for those elected. Commenting on the corruptible influence of the collective on the integrity of the individual, Hamilton (Federalist No. 15) said:

Regard to reputation has a less active influence when the infamy of bad action is to be divided among the number than when it is to fall singly upon one. A spirit of faction, which is apt to mingle its poison in the deliberations of all bodies of men, will often hurry the persons of whom they are composed into improprieties and excesses for which they would blush in a private capacity.

The greatest temptation of a public leader is the availability of someone else's money and it is to this temptation that our representatives have so easily yielded. These temptations include paying themselves what they want, approving earmarks to help each other win elections, conferring on themselves special retirement, health and other benefits, exempting themselves from laws imposed on the rest of us and escaping financial responsibility by refusing to approve budgets. These five temptations illustrate how the nobility of doing "the right" is so overwhelmingly overcome by unbalanced self-interest. The average citizen cannot understand how anyone could engage in such conduct because his everyday life does not expose him to the temptations. Even the noble ones who intend to do the right thing find their courage sapped in the face of the collective ostracism which hovers like a cloud when nobility is expressed. The irony of all this is their hubris to believe they should be reelected and that they are entitled to do almost anything to insure that result.

The way to fix this broken system is to restore wisdom and virtue to the management of government by changes to the Constitution in a way to give us better leaders. No amount of debate is going to replace current leaders with the character of those whom we call the Founding Fathers. However, process amendments to the Constitution restricting Congress' power to feather nests of its members will promote harmony and reverence in the workings of our constitutional process. Leadership takes courage and principle and today's leaders have shown they don't have these qualities. They have sacrificed the character they thought they had when

elected and yielded to the lure of personal gain, conformance and power. They have forfeited their right to call themselves “leaders of the people”.

Why do we vote for incumbent leaders who gives us an illusory and unsustainable standard of living to satisfy their need for recognition and power? Our franchise is induced by misinformation from our leaders who create the illusion that good times will continue indefinitely. The truth we need to hear is suppressed by those in power who are the beneficiaries of the fiction in which we live and who defend themselves with political correctness and a captured media which ostracize just criticism of the status quo.

The insult to our democracy is that big decisions do not reflect the informed will of the people but the will of those in power: elected leaders, pundits, and the media. Most of us who trust our leaders are easily influenced by promises of easy solutions. We may think we are pioneers living like rugged individuals when, in truth, we are part of an increasingly complex system that requires energy to go forward which does not exist, that is now protracted by unsustainable credit and the printing of money, and that is beyond our control other than saying “no” to every beneficiary of the establishment who is saying “yes”.

To accomplish the required constitutional changes requires a sound business plan outlining the organizational effort required to persuade the states, pursuant to Article V of the Constitution, to seek a limited constitutional convention to adopt necessary process amendments without the interference of Congress. We, the people, need to rise up to make this happen.

In his State of the Union address in 1963, John F. Kennedy said, “The tides of human freedom [are] in our favor” but remarking, “We are not lulled by the momentary calm of the sea or somewhat clearer skies above. We know the turbulence that lies below, and the storms that are beyond the horizon....” Now, fifty years later, the turbulence that then lied below has surfaced and the storms then beyond the horizon are now in our midst. The reforms we need will not happen unless we, the people, make them happen. The Constitution tells us how to do it. Our future depends on it. Our mission is clear. The window is narrow. Time is short. Our freedoms are at risk.

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