

## Evolutionary Thoughts about Revolution and Reconstitution . . .

*an open letter to our President from an irreverent American SOB\**

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**These words were written on July 4, 2009. While others might have been driven to celebrate the Fourth with a fifth or with a baseball game or a cookout or an evening display of fireworks, I felt compelled to sit at my keyboard and write. I guess the independence of Independence Day strikes each of us differently. I respectfully offer these thoughts of a concerned citizen to the most recent inhabitant of 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, Washington, DC 20500.**

Dear President Obama:

I was born in the winter of 1943, a month before General Dwight David Eisenhower was named to head the Allied armies in Europe and 18 months before he unleashed the D-Day invasion of Normandy. I was born under a flag with 48 stars; until I was in the 5th grade, we pledged allegiance to it without the words, "under God." America was engaged in a world war on two fronts, and the outcome was anything but certain. The President of the United States was wheelchair bound and serving his third term. He would die in the first year of his fourth term, and radio would bring the quavering voice of Arthur Godfrey into every living room with the proud but profoundly saddening details of his state funeral. The nation buried its elected parent, dried its eyes and successfully completed the necessary but repugnant tasks of war. That included ushering in the Atomic Age.

The United States of America was born in war and later nearly torn apart by it. The need for Civil War materials fostered early manufacturing genius and moved us toward our modern Iron Age. World War I literally transformed us from an agrarian society to an industrialized one. It was purely the American ability to conceive, create and produce that allowed us to survive and eventually dominate in the Second World War. Had we not been able to out-manufacture the enemy, the English language might now be extinct. But we did out-manufacture them; we mixed domestic knowledge with patriotic dedication to convert our rich natural resources to needed radar, radios, ships, planes, guns, bombs and food. And in that time of world crisis, we somehow managed to put selfish personal goals aside and work toward the betterment of mankind.

In the aftermath of WWII, America did something unprecedented in world history: we rebuilt our vanquished foes. It was the

\*SOB (Sophomoric Old Bugger) – An experienced voter who finds it hard to "swallow" the proffered party line (from left or right) and suggests there must be a far better way to run the federal government of the most important nation in the world.

right and humane thing to do, a thing of which all citizens of this nation can and should be justly proud. We showed confidence in our democratic form and in our commercial processes as well as in the innate goodness of man. What we did wasn't a Christian thing or a Jewish thing or even a religious thing; it wasn't a black, white, brown or yellow thing; it was simply a uniquely American thing, a very auspicious opening to the brief American Age of the 20th Century.

I consider myself very fortunate to have been born an American citizen, more so to have lived through the American Age. I was here when the iron lung was rendered obsolete by gamma globulin and then the Salk vaccine. I was here when the "sound barrier" was broken and saw a man walk on the moon's surface. My home saw almost continuous improvements in comfort: cheap and reliable electricity from nuclear power, affordable air conditioning, water-based paint and aluminum siding, black-and-white and then color television, push-button phones and answering machines, microwave ovens, FM radio and then stereo sound systems with long-playing record albums and reel-to-reel tape followed by cassettes and then compact discs.

I enjoyed every step of the electronic revolution, from hard tubes to transistors to chips, and was here when the microprocessor beget the personal computer. In short, I have enjoyed a comfortable and exciting existence made possible by American technology, American ingenuity, American industry and American integrity. However, I fear I now live in the rapidly descending dusk of the American Age and have no clear vision of what the future may hold.

Can we hold off this impending darkness? I don't know, but I have some suggestions that might be worth exploring. Is such exploration necessary? I fear that it is. These are not simple evolutionary notions; they are quite revolutionary, perhaps even heretical. For much of the American Age, we lived in competition with (and often in fear of) the "great red bear," the USSR. But that adversary has essentially vanished, the victim of economic "implosion." But exactly what really killed the bear and is it now stalking us? In my (never humble) opinion, the answers to those questions are: *greed* and *yes*.

I submit to you that there is nothing inherently evil about a communist society. As with our democracy, the "evil" comes in the implementation and the doing, not in the underlying philosophy. In fact, for a population starving in a hostile place, the communist notion of "let's all work together for the common good" makes perfect

sense; one might even call it a democratic notion. I have always been astounded that our nation's founding documents didn't contain more of this thought pattern. But then, my nation was founded by an eclectic mix of "break-aways" and "cast-offs" from an evolved western European society. We came to these shores as a collection of both leaders and followers, not merely a disenfranchised dissident horde. It is this societal difference that gave rise to the splendid nature of our founding documents.

While Karl Marx's *Communist Manifesto* may be a great read from a great mind, the *Declaration of Independence* and the *Constitution of the United States* are nearly poetic statements of hard-won human accord on matters of utmost human importance hammered out between brilliant men mutually facing a very difficult circumstance.

I review this not to say that good has triumphed over evil, but rather to point out that "there but for fortune, go I." The USSR vanished not to our expectation, but to our shock and surprise. We would be fools not to accept that a similar fate could await the United States. Marx's *Manifesto* prescribed need for a ruling *presidium*. It also prescribed the eventual need for that prestigious group to step down and join the *proletariat* masses. That transition never happened; the idealistic notion that men in power are willing to set that power aside and join their fellow citizens as equals requires that those rulers be very special people. The USSR didn't have them, and we don't either. This beloved experiment we know as America may actually be drawn down to ashes and ruin by those people we respectfully call *senator* and *representative*.

The simple fact of the matter is that we endure far too much government to pretend we are a free people. Every U.S. citizen is governed by nearly *Avogadro's number* ( $6.02 \times 10^{23}$ ) of laws when we consider the ever-growing confusing morass of local, state and federal rulings. The last thing we need are more laws and thus, more law-makers. What we badly need are empowered representatives willing to *remove* existing laws at every level.

But we have a Congress full of lawyers, people who know how to do little but debate, posture and conjure up further constraints upon our freedoms. The national asylum is now run by Harvard Law School (and its less influential competitors); if our nation is to survive, we must find a way to change this.

Before the asylum's inmates decide to rise to anarchy, perhaps Congress might recognize it has a chance to avert national (and personal) disaster. The time has come

for fewer legislators at every level. It is no longer acceptable for *anyone* to make a career out of elected service; no one should serve more than *one* term in *any* federal elective office. There is no longer a need for special retirement programs (or bomb-hardened bunkers under luxury resorts) for the Congress of the United States. It is time for them to stand down with the American proletariat and be limited to the same benefits accorded to all other citizens (and nothing more). Congress could make these changes *law* in an afternoon. I submit it would be well advised to do so rather than standing like a chest-puffed presidium. Let our “best” lawyers prove to be good history students in the final analysis.

I hold our Constitution, particularly the early components from Preamble through the seven Articles to Amendment 10, in the highest personal esteem. This was a document of steel-like strength, forged in fire fueled with courage. It was beautifully written by a collection of brave and intellectual men, the likes of whom may never again assemble. Our Constitution as originally enacted was a masterpiece of forward thinking written in clear and insightful prose. Our founders left nothing to be interpreted in what they wrote. They defined the rights of free men in clear and unambiguous language. They explained in those few statements what they collectively were willing to die for; what they personally refused to live without.

I only wish they had added an 11th Amendment to the Bill of Rights, something to the effect:

*We have deliberately provided for the evolutionary growth of this document through a defined process of amendment. However, being unable to predict or control the future, while understanding the selfish nature of man, we recognize that the system of law that will rise from this Constitution may eventually become corrupt, deviating from our avowed intentions. For this reason, on every tenth anniversary of this signing, all federal laws including any Amendments added to this Constitution, shall become null and void, and the United States will revert to the strict guidance of this Constitution as it was originally ratified in 1788, amended only by the original Bill of Rights ratified on December 15, 1791. It will be the obligation of the Congress to re-institute such additional laws as it then deems necessary using the processes prescribed herein.*

Yes, Mr. President, I fully understand such a Constitutional “do-over” is an unattainable pipe dream. But while I indulge in sucking upon the opiates of my own mind and reveling in the possibilities of a perpetuated American Age, let me share with you some thoughts of what might actually make such perpetuation a possibility.

The American Age was brought about by our nation’s ability to create and manufacture, not by its ability to borrow or loan. When \$10<sup>12</sup> leaves the U.S. Treasury to bolster banks and other financial institu-

tions, while our largest manufacturers are told to “suck it up” without federal assistance, I feel my President needs to review American history.

During your first address to our Congress, you discussed the economic recovery of our nation. I listened to you for more than an hour and never once heard you utter the very critical word – *manufacturing*. It is my fear that you (and the “bobble-heads” who danced behind you) completely missed what happened in the U.S. between 1941 and the present. If we are to survive this economic recession, if we are to thrive again, American *manufacturing* needs to flourish – not American banking, not our middlemen nor our brokers. If the government is to aid our economy, it needs to stimulate the nation’s *producers*, not simply appease its greatest sources of economic entropy. It is the inventors, entrepreneurs, manufacturers, farmers, teachers and physicians of this nation who are our potential salvation. Give them the help that they need to do what we need, rather than shoring up the posturing egomaniacs who have brought us to this brink of Armageddon.

There are currently 435 highly overpaid and over-rewarded people “serving” in the House of Representatives; 162 of them are lawyers. Like most citizens, I would be very hard pressed to find a single person among them who actually *represents* me, my thoughts, my philosophies, my views or my needs in any way. Of our 100 Senators, 54 are lawyers. In this voter’s view, we could do with far fewer congressmen, and I’d love to see the 40% barrister content of Congress seriously reduced. As a matter of compromise, I might learn to live with the notion that the Senate must be fully populated with lawyers, but only if I could be assured that the House of Representatives would be entirely free of them.

What we sorely need are people in Congress who understand the possible solution of our nation’s problems from their own firsthand experience, successes and failures. If we are going to solve problems of energy production, we need to populate the Congress with experienced and competent engineers and scientists. If we really want to deliver quality medical care to the nation, we need to have more than a titular sampling of physicians and nurses in our legislative branch. Education will not be improved by 535 lawyers chanting “no child left behind” in unison. It will require dedicated professional educators in Congress making tough decisions for our children intelligently and compassionately. In short, Congress must rapidly reconstitute itself to factually represent the people of America and their needs. What we must have in Congress are concerned and educated citizens serving diligently to resolve the nation’s many woes, not a league of “professional representative” dilettantes intent upon selfishly preserving their own elevated standard of living.

I am a former employee of General Motors Corporation and recently watched the

value of that company’s stock evaporate and then re-condense as the property of the U.S. Government and the UAW. As a 30-odd-year owner of that stock, this offends. I saw the chairman of GM berated by the Senate, probably by men whose election the company had largely funded. This whole issue of the U.S. Government versus American automotive manufacturers has left a very bad taste in my mouth. In my opinion, the President of the United States must refrain from trying to run any commercial business. Even giving the appearance of directing such enterprises is most inappropriate to the office and offensive to the average citizen.

If you must muck with an American industry, why not choose to disable, dismember and dissolve an outmoded albatross that is systematically destroying our nation by crushing its economy? In this voter’s view, it is time to declare that no American citizen be forced to bet against himself; it is time to *outlaw all forms of insurance and reform tort law*. We have become nationally conditioned to the notion of buying “protection” against every malady that might befall us, including death. Indeed, the law requires us to insure our cars, and banks force us to insure the titles of our homes. Tort-driven court settlements force every manufacturer and service provider to insure against liability lawsuits, real or frivolous.

When I file my income tax returns, insurance is invariably my second-highest cost of human existence, overshadowed only by those taxes. Insurance has escalated civil court judgments to unreasonable dollar levels and given rise to a civil law industry that screams to be extinguished. This in turn forces us to insure every aspect of our lives against our fellow man. Malpractice insurance is every physician’s highest cost of doing business. The insurance industry now dictates what care a doctor may deliver to his patient, and its accountants control the scope of hospital facilities made available to us. Insurance is directly responsible for more expensive automobiles and the elevated cost of all domestic goods. Tort law and insurance squeeze the life out of a free economy.

The President of the United States must often walk a fine line between multiple opposing philosophies. Ultimately, the man in your office always serves us best when he follows the very personal dictates of his own mind, heart and soul. Three hundred million of us trust our President to do just that. A very few us, this arrogant writer included, have the audacity to suggest a few dark corners of that soul that must be investigated and challenged before sleeping peacefully in *our* Whitehouse. I hope that I have illuminated those corners for your consideration candidly, clearly and respectfully.

With my fervent best wishes for your success and the survival of our wounded nation.

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