

President's Report - July, 2017 - "The Rockets' Red Glare"

As we approach Independence Day, it's appropriate - essential, actually, to ponder the meaning of the holiday, and to ask ourselves: has the Spirit of America been taught around our dinner tables, and in our schools? Is the 4th of July really about four days off work, car sales promotions, patriotic parades and awe-inspiring fireworks displays?

Our nation is severely divided. Our new president is struggling to find ways to meet his bold campaign promises to restore economic vitality, strengthen national security, rebuild our decrepit public infrastructure, and "drain the swamp" of government bureaucracy. The forces of the left, reeling from the national election results, are fighting to retain the power they have accumulated over past decades. Here in California, Sacramento lawmakers, ignoring the recently passed citizen initiative requiring that all bills be published at least 72 hours prior to passage, approved a last-minute flood of new measures without the public having any opportunity to review and comment. This demonstrates an utter lack of respect for transparency and for public engagement. Is this action ethical?

Our governor, who in his prior stint as governor promoted the very public employee benefit programs that now strangle taxpayers, robs his own "rainy-day" fund to forestall the collapse of unsustainable pension plans. Meanwhile, apparently mindful of his father's role in our history, he is determined to build fiscally ruinous legacy transportation and water projects that will never fulfill their stated goals. Is this consistent with his Jesuit moral training?

The Founders, mindful of the evils of oppressive government, crafted the most bold and enlightened form of limited government ever seen on this planet, dedicated to protecting our individual rights to live in liberty. What is this "liberty" that motivated the Founders and compelled so many of our forefathers to take up arms to defend it? As I read the Declaration and the Constitution, I understand liberty to be the state of living in freedom, and freedom to be the ability to live one's life without undue control or interference by others, most particularly by government. To support our revolution for liberty and freedom, they pledged their all, on their sacred honor. Wait; their sacred what?

This concept of virtue - honesty, personal integrity and civic accountability, underlies the very foundations of our nation. Yet, we find many of our leaders acting with abject disregard for that concept. In our own county, the chief law enforcement officer, who swore an oath to uphold the law, admitted he violated a raft of campaign rules, and lied on official financial disclosure documents. In a craven back-room deal, he received a meaningless slap on the wrist.

Are these the life lessons we want set before our children and our grandchildren?

While CoCoTax is probably most well-known for opposing bad tax measures, we must never forget that bad taxes are the result of bad government, and that good government is based on the principles laid out by the Founders. But, underlying those principles of government are the rules for virtuous behavior and civilized society set forth in Commandments carried down from the mountain thousands of years ago.

May God bless America, and all those who stand to support and defend her.

Jack Weir