



THE PATRIOT POST®

VOICE OF ESSENTIAL LIBERTY

ALEXANDER'S ESSAY

THURSDAY, APRIL 21, 2011

IT'S NOT 'WHAT THE AMERICAN PEOPLE WANT'

It's what our Constitution requires

"In questions of power, then, let no more be heard of confidence in man, but bind him down from mischief by the chains of the Constitution." --Thomas Jefferson

The oft-repeated mantra of Barack Hussein Obama and his Leftist cadres is that their public service obligation is to accomplish "what the American people want." At best, this constitutes a gross misinterpretation of the constitutional role of the executive, and at worst, it wholly and maliciously discards the intent of that august Founding text.

If not for Obama's patently obvious Socialist agenda, the populist appeal of this mantra might be excused as "constituent services" run amok in response to opinion polling, but its intent is much more sinister. In reality, the words "what the people want" are just code for a political agenda that may or may not have any correlation with what "the people" actually want, and, moreover, any correlation with what our Constitution prescribes.

Worse yet is that some notable Republicans have now adopted Obama's mischaracterization of their duty, which serves only to legitimize this subterfuge.

Our editorial team undertook an extensive review of "what the people want" as integrated into rhetoric supporting political agendas, however removed such agendas might be from their constitutional authority. Here is what we found.

Barack Obama is the most frequent offender:

When he was running for president, Obama asserted: "You know I taught constitutional law for 10 years at the University of Chicago, so, um, your next president will actually believe in the Constitution." In his campaign treatise, "The Audacity of Hope," he feigns appreciation for the Constitution: "I confess that there is a fundamental humility to this reading of the Constitution and our democratic process."

In reality, however, his contempt for our Constitution

is unprecedented, and framing his agenda as "what the people want" is a covert assault upon Rule of Law, consistent with his "fundamental transformation" scheme for "change."

Obama packages his assault as follows:

What the American people want more than anything... The American people want to know if it's still possible for Washington to look out for their interest, for their future. ... That's the project the American people want us to work on. ... The fact of the matter is the American people already agree with me. The American people want Washington leaders to act... I believe it's time to give the American people more control... The American people want to see Washington ... make progress on jobs. ... What the American people don't want... That's what the American people expect. ... Get the business of the American people done. ...something this important to the American people. The American people want us to reform... The American people want less... The American people want more... Everybody understands that the American people want us to focus on their jobs...

Ad Nauseum...

Typical of his unmitigated arrogance, when Obama's agenda does not progress, he suggests that the American people are just too stupid to understand it. "Making an argument that people can understand, I think that we haven't always been successful at that. Republicans were able to paint my governing philosophy as a classic, traditional, big government liberal. And that's not something that the American people want."

Obama's Senate lap dog, Majority Leader Harry Reid (D-NV), got the memo:

The American people love government but they don't like too much politics in government. ... The American people want us to work together. ... The Tea Party's unpopularity continues to grow, because the American people sees [sic] how unreasonable they are. ... It's clear that while the American people and Senate Democrats are looking ahead, Senate Republicans are looking for a way to distract the American people. ... I don't think the Ameri-

can people want to do that. ... What the American people wants now is certainty.

Unfortunately, Senate Minority Leader Mitch McConnell (R-KY) is reading from the same script:

Both sides are working hard to reach the kind of resolution Americans desire. ... We know what the American people want. ... Something we know the American people want. The American people want us to put aside the left-wing wish list. ... Democrat lawmakers chose to ignore the American people. ... The American people want us to focus on creating jobs. ... Republicans have a plan for following through on the wishes of the American people."

House Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi (D-CA) is, not surprisingly, singing the same tune:

Democrats now need to talk about how we have a progressive economic agenda. That's what the American people want. ... Let's just do what is right for the American people. ... Those of us who are involved in politics and government know that our responsibility is to the American people.

Regrettably, second only to Obama's invoking "what the people want" is none other than House Speaker John Boehner (R-OH):

It's encouraging to see President Obama acknowledge that the American people want us to focus on creating jobs and cutting spending. ... Our job now is to listen to the people and follow the will of the American people. ... The American people want us to do something. ... The American people want us to scrap this bill. ... When are we going to begin to listen once again to the American people? ... Beginning in January, the House is going to become the outpost in Washington for the American people. ... I hope President Obama will listen to the American people. ... If we don't deliver what the American people are demanding... Instead of living up to the mandate set by the American people, congressional Democrats have defied the will of the American people. ... What we need to do is to listen to the American people. ... If we're listening to the American people, I don't see any problems incorporating members of the Tea Party along with our party in a quest that's really the same. ... The American people want us to focus on their message.

On the eve of his ascension to the Speaker's chair, Boehner, who has had some difficulty citing the Constitu-

tion, proclaimed, "The American people want a smaller, more accountable government -- and that starts with respecting the Constitution. That's why we will read it on the floor next week. It sends the clear message that starting on January 5th, the House of Representatives will be the American people's outpost in Washington, DC."

"Respecting the Constitution" because that is "what the people want"? Wrong, start with the Constitution because that is your sacred obligation, if you in fact honor your oath to support Rule of Law, not flippant populism.

Our United States Constitution, as written and ratified, stipulates in its preface that it is "ordained and established" by the people to "secure the Blessings of Liberty to ourselves and our Posterity." To that end, it established a Republic, not a popular democracy, which is to say it affirmed the primacy of Rule of Law over rule of men.

Accordingly, the first order of business for those elected to national office is that they be bound by oath to "preserve, protect and defend" the Constitution under which they were duly elected.

For those elected to the presidency, Article II, Section 1 is clear: "Before he enter on the Execution of his Office, he shall take the following Oath or Affirmation: 'I do solemnly swear (or affirm) that I will faithfully execute the Office of President of the United States, and will to the best of my Ability, preserve, protect and defend the Constitution of the United States.'"

Likewise Article VI, Clause 3 specifies, "The Senators and Representatives before mentioned, and the Members of the several State Legislatures, and all executive and judicial Officers, both of the United States and of the several States, shall be bound by Oath or Affirmation, to support this Constitution..."

Our Founders intended that elected officials, by way of their oaths, would be constrained by Rule of Law. However, there was an errant assumption that those elected would be men and women of honor who would abide by their oaths.

Democrats and Republicans alike, who justify the violation of the explicitly enumerated powers authorized by our Constitution, ostensibly because they are doing "what the people want," are in abject violation of their oaths, and they are not being held accountable for that fundamental breach of trust.

For the record, our editorial staff also reviewed national leadership references to our Constitution, and found few.

Boehner did open the 112th Congress with a bipartisan reading of an “abridged” politically correct version of our Constitution.

Also, in his brief opening remarks to the 112th Congress, Boehner did say, “Let’s start with the rules package the House will consider today. If passed, it will change how this institution operates, with an emphasis on real transparency, greater accountability, and a renewed focus on the Constitution.”

However, as for his much-heralded revision of clause 7 of House rule XII to specify, “A bill or joint resolution may not be introduced unless the sponsor submits for printing in the Congressional Record a statement citing as specifically as practicable the power or powers granted to Congress in the Constitution to enact the bill or joint resolution,” the qualifier “specifically as practicable” undermines any substance this proposal might have had and should be stricken post haste.

This House Rule alteration falls well short of what we really need, The Enumerated Powers Amendment as proposed by *The Patriot Post* years ago.

Despite the fact that Republican leaders are flip-flopping on what this “Constitution thing” is about, the good news is that most of the freshman class in the 112th Congress

are a new breed of representative singularly devoted to our Constitution and Rule of Law.

Perhaps congressional leaders should start with “civics 101,” and a thorough reading of our Essential Liberty pocket guide, and this word of advice from George Washington’s farewell address: “The basis of our political systems is the right of the people to make and to alter their constitutions of Government. But the Constitution, which at any time exists, ‘till changed by an explicit and authentic act of the whole People, is sacredly obligatory upon all. ... If in the opinion of the people the distribution or modification of the constitutional powers be in any particular wrong, let it be corrected by an amendment in the way which the constitution designates. But let there be no change by usurpation; for though this in one instance may be the instrument of good, it is the customary weapon by which free governments are destroyed. The precedent must always greatly overbalance in permanent evil any partial or transient benefit, which the use can at any time yield.”

Veritas vos Liberabit -- Semper Vigilo, Fortis, Paratus, et Fidelis! Mark Alexander, Publisher, for *The Patriot Post*’s editors and staff. Read online at <http://patriotpost.us>

(Please pray for our Armed Forces standing in harm’s way around the world, and for their families -- especially families of those fallen Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen, Marines and Coast Guardsmen, who granted their lives in defense of American liberty.)