

## MEMO FROM THE MAYOR

### SUBJECT: The Proper Role of Government at the Local Level, Part 1

#### At a Glance:

- I'm a conspiracy buff. My pronouns are told/you/so  
(A really clever meme making the rounds on the internet)
- Whenever the legislators endeavor to take away and destroy the property of the people, or to reduce them to slavery under arbitrary power, they put themselves into a state of war with the people, who are thereupon absolved from any further obedience. —John Locke  
(Compare the Declaration of Independence)

#### The Mother of All Messes

From time-to-time, this column has detailed the bi-partisan dumpster fire our seat of national government has produced over last one-hundred years or so. For example, simply consider the \$31.45 trillion debt, now expected to reach \$41 trillion in the next 4 years and the (at this writing) Senate-proposed \$1.7 Trillion bi-partisan Omnibus Bill. Thanks, Chuck and Mitch! (Dead on House arrival?) Consider this: if we wanted to count to just one trillion in seconds, it would take us 31,000-plus years. This disaster alone obviates any need to address in detail the Deep State warning President Eisenhower gave sixty-one years ago about the then-denominated Military-Industrial Complex, which, thanks in large part to September 11<sup>th</sup> and the misnamed Patriot Act, has morphed into the Military-Intelligence-Technology-Industrial Complex.

President Eisenhower, if you weren't around then, warned the country in his televised Farewell Address in January 1961 that our individual rights were in jeopardy if we allowed the cancer of this intertwined complex to metastasize. His prescience, of course, is demonstrated by the most recent revelations made concerning the FBI's interactions with social media covered in Elon Musk's "Twitter dumps". Then again, we must remember, Ike helped to feed the complex so it *could* metastasize. Perhaps his address constituted more of a confession than a warning.

Once upon a time, grade school students in our country committed to their memory the Preamble to the federal constitution. For those who never participated in this truly meet, right and salutary exercise—or, perhaps, forgot what it says—we find the following:

We the people of the United States, in order to form a more perfect Union, establish justice, insure [sic] domestic tranquility, provide for the common

defense, promote the general welfare, and secure the blessings of liberty to ourselves and our prosperity, do ordain and establish this Constitution of the United States of America.

As an aside, the Articles of Confederation were less than satisfactory. They created thirteen un-united sovereign fiefdoms. Indeed, it was a committee of the Confederation Congress in May 1785 that recommended altering the Articles of Confederation but when no action was taken, it passed a resolution in February of 1787 calling for a Constitutional Convention, and the rest, as oft-said, is history.

So far, so good, "n'est-ce pas?" as Ben Franklin might have asked when our French envoy. Or, is it? Clearly the Preamble states that "We the People" ordained all those platitudes. So, we're a democracy, right? We, the People? ESPN's Lee Corso often proclaims on Colleges Game Day, "Not so fast!"

Conservative purists say, "Absolutely not! We are not a democracy; instead, we are a constitutional republic!" But are we even that? Facially, maybe. Practically, heavens no! The English term democracy comes from the Greek: "demos", i.e., people and "kratos", i.e., power. This literally translates the term into the English as "people power". We the People have the power—the "consent"—right?

### **The Terrible Cost of Constitutional Illiteracy**

Okay, let's do a quick thought experiment. Who voted for the \$31.45 trillion debt, which takes \$108 Billion a year to service? Did you? No? Okay, did you vote for the FBI to have weekly, if not daily, meetings with Twitter executives, guiding how Twitter treated information covering a number of topics, particularly Hunter Biden's laptop? Then we can say, at least in those instances, We the People did not have an active voice. (Our military in a warzone would call the Twitter meetings the "planning function" of information operations (IO), or what was formerly known as psychological warfare. Before that, we simply called it propaganda. In Iraq, I was the primary staff officer handling the IO slice for the 116th Brigade Combat Team in 2004/05, producing two shows a week on Kurdish television and drafting all the talking points for the Brigade soldiers each week. It's part of the full-spectrum of warfare that ranges from information to the kinetic fight. IO matters inhabit the information environment.)

Clearly, then, we are not a pure democracy. For one, we don't show up to vote for all the bills enacted each year in Congress or our legislature. In fact, we don't show up in mass to vote

on proposals at city council or county commissioner meetings. Even in public meetings all we can do is give elected officials a piece of our mind.

The next several columns will explore the notions of “democracy” and constitutional republics as they apply to “one nation under God” in the so-called United States. We just might discover how our governments have shifted, even at the local level, from 17th century notions of “one people under God” to “social contract” notions of the 18th century of We the People and our much-amended constitution (twenty-five to date, not counting the “amendments and tweaks” SCOTUS makes virtually every session of court).

Consider this, under Article 4 of the US Constitution, which deals with State and Territorial Relations, Section 4 thereof purports to “...guarantee to every state in this Union a republican form of government, and shall protect each of them against invasion; and on application of the legislature, or of the executive (when the legislature cannot be convened) against domestic violence.” How is that working out for us?

Hence, being guaranteed a republican form of government at the state level, we will examine in the next several columns the proper function of local government in Idaho, specifically of the municipal variety, and how it should look and operate.