

MEMO FROM THE MAYOR

SUBJECT: Fundamentals That Will Save Our Republic from The Current Sinking Ship of The Administrative State.

At a Glance:

- **“A Republic, if you can keep it.” Benjamin Franklin, 1787.**
- **“The traditional notion of citizenship is dying.” Victor Davis Hanson, (2021)**

January is the month of resolutions and carrying out our best of intentions. Accordingly, I intend to follow the advice of a young, patriotic essayist I know. A sophomore in high school, she’s won several awards in her young career of writing and speaking about patriotic themes. In a recent speech, she noted that when athletic teams enter a slump, their coaches often return to focusing on fundamental skills required for their sport. The goal is to reacquire muscle memory allowing performance at a higher level, obviating the need to think about it, or even worse, dwell on it to a distraction.

Indeed, my New Year’s resolution, then, is to get back to the fundamentals of our Constitutional Republic. We will explore how our Republic came about, what earlier Republics the Founders had in mind when they created ours by crafting the Constitution of the United States and why the Republic form of government worked for two ancient and powerful civilizations, but ultimately failed. This seems the thing to do in 2022.

In this journey, I am indebted to the Heritage Foundation for its remarkable document, *The Essential Constitution*. This 24-page work gives its readers an excellent 30,000-foot view of our Constitution, its origins and its genius. I am further indebted to Professor Victor Davis Hanson and his Hillsdale College On-Line Course entitled “American Citizen Citizenship and It’s Decline,” which is based upon his new book, *The Dying Citizen*. Hanson puts together an extremely enlightening course. He has a unique way of connecting historical dots that easily explains our current political milieu.

In fact, I encourage all readers of this column to sign-up for Hillsdale courses. It’s easy to do; they’re educational, and you will amaze your family and friends on just how inciteful and learned you have become concerning historical and constitutional issues. As an added bonus, one receives a college-level education in the course studied, but in easy bites.

We will also discover in this year's Memo series that our Federal Government was designed as a *limited* government along with its courts of *limited* jurisdiction. Such a concept might confuse many in the current environment, especially our youth. They have been conditioned to look to Washington, D.C. for sustenance, knowledge and virtue. Yet, to paraphrase a famous line of the New Testament, can anything good come out of D.C.?

If the original intent of our Constitution's drafters declaring our federal government be a limited one comes as a surprise to anyone, it's because the federal government has not operated as designed since at least the Wilson Administration, and perhaps, not since Teddy Roosevelt's at the beginning of the 20th century. TR, if not the father of our government's Progressive bent, is at least it's grandfather. Progressivism as originally crafted during the early Progressive Movement (1896-1916) falsely claimed our Constitution was obsolete. Progressivism's work around, then, entailed bypassing the tedious (and expensive) work of lobbying Congress for this or that legislation by simply having bureaucrats make the rules. Progressives smugly noted the right kind of President would put together a team of bureaucrats to make "the right things" happen administratively. Sound familiar?

As an interesting side note, the concept of "bureaucracy" comes from the French. In English, it translates literally to "the rule of the desk." The French, Hanson claims, used the term to describe the tens of thousands of unelected French citizens administering the government. How many paid federal bureaucrats are there? That always depends on the administration in question and the budget under which it operates.

While Republican Administrations tend to be leaner than Democratic ones, there are exceptions. When Bill Clinton announced the end of the Era of Big Government, he apparently failed to account for Bush 43 coming along, the Compassionate Conservative, who blew up everything for the Long War.

Nevertheless, we can expect no less than four million on the federal payroll at any one time, and it can easily expand to 8 million. When one counts all government employees at all levels, federal, state, and the various local governments—from counties, to cities, to separate taxing districts—Hanson estimates all levels comprise about 140 million employees. The current census puts the US at about 333.5 million. What this means, then, is governments at all levels employ about 42% of our work force. With all those employees, shouldn't it be easier to give away "free" stuff instead of all the difficulties now reported?

Progressivism, in its infancy, then, simply averred that we replace the ponderous federalism with its separation of powers demarked under our Constitution with really smart Ivy League-type college graduates making administrative laws for us, thus playing the executive, legislative and judicial branches in one package. The second Roosevelt, FDR, took the Administrative State to new heights during the Depression and War Years. Nevertheless, LBJ fed it steroids in the 1960s—and we all know how great his Great Society worked out for us all.

As an added “benefit”, Congress now has more time to investigate each other’s parties, their demagogues, and corrupt military contractors. In the meantime, unelected, unaccountable, and unauditible bureaucrats craft rules and regulations for every aspect of our lives. Perish the thought of any abuse resulting from this model. Farmers appreciate the EPA declaring ponds formed seasonally on their farmland as inland waterways, subject to the Clean Water Acts fines for any transgressions like nitrogen leaching. Who could possibly be critical of Lois Lerner, Obama’s head of the IRS tax-exempt division? Sure, she scrutinized a little more closely those organizations—read Christian or patriotic or both—that just might not have been so friendly to the Obama Administration’s policies before granting tax-exempt status—provided she actually granted it. But I have no doubt ANTIFA chapters received the same scrutiny, too—to underscore her even-handedness, of course.

I will also draw upon two books that I recommend to readers for their own libraries. First, *The Parasitic Mind*, by Dr. Gad Saad and *Warning to the West*, a small, very readable tome by Alexander Solzhenitsyn, he of *One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich*, *Cancer Ward* and *The Gulag Archipelago* fame, among other works. Lest I forget, we will also cover prophetic comments made by a former Soviet KGB spy who defected to the West.

In the ensuing Memos, we will learn, then, that the original idea of citizenship in Western Civilization wrappings is dying and being replaced with a world-state concept of citizenship. If one desires to forgo one’s American citizenship to replace it with one the world provides, one will encounter significant consequences. Even though Progressives (more accurately, neo-Marxists) think this is a good thing to do, as an intellectual exercise, if nothing else, there exists a big problem summed up in one word: sovereignty. Stay tuned. This is going to be informative.