

Enemy of the State? Count Me In

All my life I've felt a bond with places and with people.

Growing up in Boonville, North Carolina, population then about 600, I went to elementary school and the Methodist church, knew many of the merchants in town—Harvey Smith, grocer and mayor for many years, Donald the barber, Mr. Weatherwax who owned the pharmacy and was kind enough to let me read comic books on the premises, and a dozen more adults—and relished my friends and their families. Boonville's red clay and rolling hills are as much a part of me as any genetic code.

And then there were the other places I've lived—New York, Connecticut, Boston, California, Charlottesville in Virginia, Waynesville and Asheville in North Carolina, and for the last five years, Front Royal in Virginia—that became home to me, one for only a year, one for 20 years, but always home.

This was the case because all around me was my country, a people and a land joined together under a flag. That aspiring physician in Charlottesville who brought flags to every classroom in his son's school and taught the kids the Pledge of Allegiance; that old-style liberal in North Carolina, a good friend, who recognized the flaws of our country but also its grandeur; my lovely wife putting out small American flags along the sidewalk of our bed-and-breakfast every Independence Day: these and a thousand other people and events have connected me to the goodness of this beautiful country in which I live.

Those same affectionate emotions don't extend to the state, in particular the federal government, especially given their recent actions. There's a name for the situation when government servants become government masters. It's called

tyranny.

In the last 250 years, our nation shifted from a republic with a central government of limited powers to an oligarchy of politicians, bureaucrats, corporations, and some in the mass media—a conglomeration that today seeks to rule every aspect of our lives. These are the people who constantly proclaim themselves as wise and benevolent rulers who wish only the best for their subjects.

And they're failing on every front.

Federal aid and regulations have damaged our elementary and secondary public schools.

Federal aid to our universities has brought inflated tuitions and massive student debts.

Federal regulation has proven catastrophic for our health care system.

We lose the wars we fight, not because of the courage of our soldiers but because those in power often make ignorant decisions.

That same government has spent us into perpetual debt.

The list goes on, but it's the Chinese virus that revealed both the tyranny and ineptitude of our government. The lockdowns were disasters for small businesses and schools. The unconstitutional mandates demanding that all citizens receive an experimental vaccine are further damaging everything from our airlines industry to our hospitals as employees walk away or are fired for their refusal to take the jab.

Meanwhile, while some places restrict access to restaurants, movie theaters, and other public arenas to the vaccinated, our southern border has become a highway for refugees, none of whom are vetted for the vaccine. Defense from invasion, which

should be the first job of government, has gone missing.

And that is effectively where we are today. For nearly two years, prompted by a virus, the federal government and some of our state governors have bullied, threatened, harassed, and intimidated the American people. They've used fear and division as their cudgels to keep us cowed and beaten down.

But are we finally seeing a rebellion against these tyrants?

If we carefully sift through the information our censors still allow to appear online, I believe a revolt is already in the making in America. That nurse who decides to maintain sovereignty over her body and walks off her job is a model of heroism. That parent who confronts a school board for teaching critical race theory or for allowing boys into the girls' locker room is leading a charge against government. That university professor who won't buckle when falsely accused of racism is a splendid foot soldier in this rebellion. The refusal of certain Congressional Democrats to support an insane spending bill indicates some of them are in touch with their constituents.

We Americans have been asleep for a long time now, failing to surveil our politicians and bloated bureaucracy. As our Declaration of Independence tells us, "...all experience hath shewn, that mankind are more disposed to suffer, while evils are sufferable, than to right themselves by abolishing the forms to which they are accustomed."

In the very next sentence, however, this same document states that when the people suffer from "a long train of abuses and usurpations," then "it is their right, it is their duty, to throw off such Government."

A few years later, the Founding Fathers then devised a

Constitution with its separation of powers and Bill of Rights that reflects their fears of a tyrannical government.

Like those ancestors, today's Republicans and Democrats, liberals and conservatives, would be wise to regard the state as an enemy, not as a friend.

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