

23. COMMON DEFENSE AND THE CONSTITUTION #2

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Former Senator Schmitt Faults President's View of America

President Obama, from all available evidence, does not grasp the very special nature of America. Maybe he missed that part of growing up as an American. Maybe he really believes that the Constitution impedes "change" rather than existing as a bulwark against tyranny and a blueprint for the governance of a free people.

Maybe the President's near-term compassion has overwhelmed his common sense and his Oath to "preserve, protect and defend the Constitution of the United States." Maybe neither his teachings as a child nor his schools in Indonesia, nor his elite education in Hawaii, nor his readings as an adult included an objective view of the history of America's beginnings, maturation, and indispensable role over two and a half centuries as the protector of human liberty.

Maybe the President does not understand or comprehend the motivations of Americans in wars spanning 233 years when they fought and died and worked and produced on behalf of freedom, sustained by the idea of America. Maybe, just maybe, the President really believes he and his party should force Americans to give up their uniqueness and be like almost everyone else in the world; that is, an elitist-led, socialistically confined people with few, if any, real liberties to enhance their lives and those of their children. Maybe the President also does not

see any value in providing clear, continuing, and global protection against those who would take our liberties from us by stealth or force.

This Administration has demonstrated in its economic, defense, and foreign policies and actions that it wants America to forego its dominant position in world affairs and in the protection of liberty. It views America and Americans as unexceptional and the Constitution is considered just a piece of paper without the power to constrain political and ideological ambition. This antipathy toward the America of history and the Constitution of our Founders may come from the President's own upbringing and education away from their influences during critical formative years. Further, most of his senior formal and informal advisors have ties to anti-American radicalism. The President and these advisors may well love America, but it is love for a radically changed America and not love for the traditional America of individual liberty and personal responsibility.

America also has fallen victim to a non-public Presidential edict to cancel or significantly modify all possible policies rooted in American exceptionalism. Further antipathy exists toward most policies instituted by the Bush Administration. No longer will the government speak or act on the war on terror or encourage democracy nor provide critical

missile defenses, nuclear deterrence, economic growth, spending restraint, tax cuts, choice in education and healthcare, or, indeed, dominance in the new ocean of space. All evidence indicates, from bailouts to healthcare to immigration to missile defense, that the White House policy rule is “if most Americans are for something, this Administration will be against it.”

A general philosophical and psychological uniqueness characterizes the vast majority of Americans, originating from the circumstances of their ancestors or their immigration to these shores. No matter what ethnic or racial roots individual citizens may have, immigration rapidly brought the lover of freedom, the risk-taker, the ambitious, the learned, the innovator, or the survivor of tyranny to America. For over 450 years, millions of men and women voluntarily left familiar lands and lives for the promise of liberty and a new start; or involuntarily found that promise through the personal sacrifice as former slaves or indentured servants. Men and women of all ethnic backgrounds, with cultural heritages in Europe, Africa, Latin America, and Asia, have come together as Americans to improve their lives and to help those in former homelands resist tyranny and survive hardship. No other peoples in history have contributed to others, and done so routinely and voluntarily, what Americans have contributed with their lives and treasure. We indeed are special, not perfect, but certainly not “arrogant” as the President often alleges or implies.

News out of Washington today could be explained if our long-term protagonists had succeeded in having a sympathetic ideologue elected to the Presidency and his allied majority elected to the Congress. The moves to dismantle the economic, educational, and defense foundations of the United States of America by the President and his party indi-

cates strongly that the hypothetical but nonetheless nefarious intent of such a plan may be closer to realization than many imagine. His persistent, daily, direct and indirect attacks on individual liberty also can be explained in this context, whether these enemies of America exist as terrorists, bullies like China and Russia, any one of several petty totalitarian regimes, or foreign and domestic purveyors of a self-serving anti-American ideology. Further, the new President has laid the groundwork, in unbelievably huge and dangerously costly debt, and extreme “stimulus,” budget, tax, and regulatory packages, for exactly what would eliminate the ability of the United States Government to carry out its constitutionally mandated role to “provide for the common Defence, promote the general Welfare, and secure the Blessings of Liberty to ourselves and our Posterity.”

Americans face the fact that the President now presides over foreign, intelligence, and national defense policies that work against the preservation of American liberty. Who could have imagined the following foreign policy dichotomy? The President explicitly encourages dictators and would be dictators in Iran, North Korea, China, Russia, Venezuela, Honduras, Ecuador, Syria, Lebanon, and throughout the United Nations. Then, at the same time the President insults old and new allies such the United Kingdom, Honduras, Poland, Czech Republic, Israel, Georgia, Columbia, Iraq, and Afghanistan. The encouragement of new democracies and freedom fighters against tyranny is off the diplomatic table while legal immigration status is given to members of terrorist organizations like Hamas. This feckless approach to dealings with both enemies and allies lacks a nationalistic as well as a realistic assessment of all immediate and long-term threats to our security. The situation is so outlandish that one must

assume that the President and his advisors know exactly what they are doing.

The President gives financial aid and moral equivalence to terrorists attacking Israel and other democratic nations. He gives constitutional protections to foreign terrorists caught red-handed in attacks on Americans while at the same time prosecuting Americans who served their country as ordered in time of war. He works to release captured enemy combatants and terrorists to again attack U.S. citizens and soldiers or to live among us. As if this were not enough, the President then unconstitutionally jeopardizes our “common Defence” at home and abroad with massive reductions in the military budgets necessary to counter conventional and non-conventional capabilities in the hands of China and Russia and their surrogates. His tacit acquiescence to the development or acquisition of weapons of mass destruction by Islamic extremists and various rogue nations endangers Americans at home and abroad, particularly those in our armed forces. Now we have the spectacle of telling these enemies of liberty that we will not build necessary defenses or retaliate in kind if weapons of mass destruction are used against us. Much of the deterrence that would be provided by our willingness to use such weapons in self-defense has disappeared under this President.

The courage and dedication of the American service man and woman remains, as it always has, the most positive and lasting protector of our liberty and, indeed, the liberty of others. Today, the all volunteer Army, Navy, Air Force, Marines, Coast Guard, and National Guard and Reserves constitute the most capable and feared fighting force in the world as well as the most humanitarian. Maintaining, expanding and anticipating the needed capabilities, adequate size, and motivation of that force always should be “job

one” for the President and the Congress in providing for the “common Defence.” We owe these men and women and their families our deepest appreciation, continued regard and support, and far more significant rewards than they currently receive for their service and sacrifice.

How will we find our way out of the looming national security wilderness into which the President has taken us? The first basic step is clear: the supporters of liberty must take control of enough seats in the Congress in 2010 to stop further erosion of the nation’s security and economic foundations and then recover rapidly from there. To do this, liberty’s defenders must formulate a new Contract with America and this time never turn back from that Contract as happened after 1998. The New Contract should include the following commitments: reinforce the basic tenets and intent of the Constitution relative to national security and federal domestic policy; recreate our educational system as a parentally controlled system focused on students rather than unions; revitalize our free enterprise economy on the proven basis of free markets and personal enterprise; rebuild, enhance, and maintain a strong and flexible military; reconstitute a comprehensive and effective foreign and domestic intelligence structure; move vigorously to contain or remove centers of anti-democratic evil in the world; and re-forge alliances with traditional allies and newly democratic nations.

A New Contract with America does not constitute an easily achieved set of commitments, but clearly, they must be met, and met soon. Unless the supporters of liberty regroup and move forward successfully, the ideologue in the White House, his party, and his media acolytes will seek to make our task impossible. And, without our wholehearted commitment to liberty, they may

succeed. With the understanding and pledge that we can always improve on history, we should take pride in what our ancestors and we have accomplished for American families, and indeed, for the world. In the face of new attacks on freedom and property, preserving and enhancing liberty stands as a cause worthy of a new generation of Founders.

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