

## A Blast of the Trumpet Against the Alleged Constitutional Utopia

Constitutional literacy is vanishing from American education. According to a recent Washington Post article, most Americans don't know much about the Constitution or their government. Such ignorance is tragic, not only because it creates whole societies of uneducated voters, but also allows for politicians to abuse their powers without repercussions. If America is to return to its original federal limits, then she must learn about her Constitution and government.

Article 1 details the establishment of a two-house Congress. The House of Representatives, based on state populations, is composed of representatives elected by the people every two years; members of the Senate, though, serve for six years, each state having two senators. Altogether, Congress can regulate commerce, impeach and remove appointed officials, create taxes, etc.; this list constitutes many of today's federal powers.

The President and his powers are described in Article 2, which grants certain abilities to his office, such as making treaties, serving as commander-in-chief of the militia, and appointing officials to the Supreme Court or to various departments of government. Article 3, in similar fashion, describes the jurisdiction of the Supreme Court and its justices. Both articles 2 and 3 are smaller because the Founders weren't concerned about them abusing their powers as frequently as Congress.

Articles 4-7 are smaller, yet important sections of the Constitution, covering areas that the Fathers thought necessary to restrain or clarify. Article 4, for example, discusses state-to-state and state-to-federal relationships, laying down boundaries while creating procedures for the addition of new states to the Union. Following this crucial discussion are articles 5-7, sections that detail the Constitution's amendment process, its power as the "supreme law of the land", and

its ratification requirements respectively, confirming that this would become America's federal blueprint.

All seven articles, put together, make up the foundation of American government; their guiding principles has been the standard of conduct for 200 years. Of course, there's been changes to the Constitution over the years as some sections become void or are revised by amendments, but it is still America's most precious document, even more so than the Declaration of Independence.

Unfortunately, though, the Constitution has been violated and abused many times by the federal government. All three branches of government, Congress, the President, and the Supreme Court, are guilty of expanding federal jurisdictions beyond their constitutional limits; their vow to defend and uphold the Constitution has become little more than a ritual, void of meaning or obligation.

Consider, for example, the current banking system of the United States. The power to regulate monetary matters has, since 1913 belonged to the Federal Reserve, a banking system designed to provide economic stability and facilitate financial growth. Through their manipulation of money supply and interest rates, businesses, banks, the stock market, and loans are affected; as interest rates change, so do profits and payments. All of this authority comes from one source: the paper dollar, which the Treasury produces for the Federal Reserve. These very powers, though, are direct constitutional violations, usurpations of the power granted to Congress.

One such violation is in the valuing of money. The Federal Reserve, in order to control interest rates, adds or removes circulating money from the system, thus lowering or raising rates and the dollar's value. Higher interest, for instance, leads to higher prices, which makes the

dollar worth less, and vice versa. Such currency manipulation, though, violates Article 1, section 8, which states “[Congress shall have power] *to coin Money, regulate the value thereof,* and of foreign Coin, and fix the standard of Weights and Measures.” (Emphasis is mine.) Congress alone has the power to give money its value; therefore, the Treasury should be in charge of regulating interest rates, not the Federal Reserve.

If Congress alone can regulate currency, then why did they create the Federal Reserve in the first place? Because Congress believes that it can delegate its sole authority to others, a controversial power affirmed in *McCulloch vs Maryland (1819)*. Congress can, of course, create government departments to execute its various functions and laws; the Federal Reserve, though, isn’t a government agency. Its decisions and actions are made by a board of governors within the bank, not by executive or legislative dictation. Congress, therefore, has no power over the national currency, and it cannot stop the dollar from losing buying power over time, both direct violations of Article 1, section 8.

The Constitution is under attack from those in power not willing to adhere to its standards. In order to defend it from abuse, though, there must be a foundation, a foundation firmly built upon mastery of the issue’s ideology. Civics must be a core subject, if not the most important subject. Unless Americans ground themselves in constitutional history and law, the tyranny of those in power will continue unchecked, deceiving the people with a false utopia.