

"OUR DEMOCRACY" ≠ OUR REPUBLIC: An Example of "Words Have Meaning".

When leaving the Constitutional Convention, Ben Franklin, as the story goes, was asked "What kind of government have you given us?" He famously replied, "A republic, if you can keep it." That may come as a surprise to many people today, who have been taught, "a democracy, if you can keep it." That small sleight of tongue, unremarked by many Americans, is misleading us onto a path to disaster.

Even Presidential candidate Kamala Harris seems to misunderstand democracy, or perhaps she was speaking of "our democracy" when she stated that 'democracy protects our rights'. Her rights perhaps, her party's "rights" perhaps, but my rights? In a pure democracy, might makes right; the will of the majority (or the apparent, or self-proclaimed majority) holds unrestrained power. Even assuming a true majority opinion, that opinion is easily manipulated by a political machine that controls education, entertainment, and information flow. In practice, the 'majority' seems always to be represented by only a few individuals. "The people demand it", "In the name of the people", "The People's Republic"— such declarations of 'democracy' have a bloody and very undemocratic history.

In a constitutional republic however, ultimate power is invested in law, not men. A constitutional democratic republic, like ours, is (or was?) a hybrid governing system. Our Constitution grants a lot of power to the national government (ostensibly governing according to the will of the majority) but it does limit the power of government (the majority or the ruling few) over the "Natural Rights" of the masses of individual American citizens (their right to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness, etc.) That limitation of power derives from two characteristics of our Constitution: first is the enumerated limitations listed in the Bill of Rights and other places in the Constitution; and secondly, in the dispersal of authority not explicitly vested in the federal government.

It can be said that the Constitution exists more to protect the rights of citizens than to govern them. Unfortunately that state of affairs does not suit some people's ambitions, so the Constitution is constantly under attack, and now seems to be "underwater". Without getting further into political philosophy, let me sum up the difference between "Our Democracy" and "our Republic": In our Constitutional Republic, Republicans and Democrats have rights to equal treatment under the law. And the reach of the legal system is limited also.

Under "our democracy", Democrats hold all levers of legal power and have no liability under law. Republicans have no rights under law, and the "law" seemingly no constraints. That's about the size of it, with very little exaggeration.

The Democrat Party, like the Communist Party, has become more important to its members than the nation as a whole and its traditions of law. That is partly because so many people derive their incomes from the Party. Many others are simply habituated by generations of Democrat demonization of Republicans that they are incapable of impartial judgments.

To apply "Lincoln's Law", which he derived from the Bible, "'A house divided against itself cannot stand.' I believe this government cannot endure permanently half *slave* and half *free*. I do not expect the Union to be *dissolved* — I do not expect the house to *fall* — but I *do* expect it will cease to be divided. It will become *all* one thing or *all* the other."

The tragic events of the 1860's stand as a stark warning of the lengths some people will go to rule others. As an afterthought to that statement it has occurred to me that not everyone who might be reading this is familiar with those events, so here is a little history.

For years the American nation had been struggling with the issue of slavery, The importation of slaves was banned as of 1808, but slave smuggling continued into the southern states. Often violent conflicts accompanied political arguments over expansion of slavery into new states of the west. The nation became bitterly divided as the contest coalesced into two political parties, Democrat and Republican. Anti-slavery Republican Abraham Lincoln was elected president in 1860, but Democrat controlled states in the south refused to accept Lincoln and withdrew from the United States forming their own Confederate States of America in 1861. After a brief period of uncertainty, the Confederacy forced war upon the country by attacking Fort Sumter outside Charleston.

The Confederate leaders knew that they could not ultimately defeat the much larger and better equipped Union Armies. Their plan, not at all kept secret, was 'to shed so much blood that public opinion will force the Federal government to accept our independence'. They shed all the blood they could for four years, destroying the south in the process, but were defeated. It is tragically ironic how similar is today's situation; a new Democrat Party, with a blindly obedient following, determined to gain power at all cost.