



Obama vs. Us

Suppose you saw a person driving his car on the wrong side of a highway, against the traffic. Would you call him a stupid and/or incompetent driver? You say, "Williams, what kind of question is that? Of course he's one or the other!" I'd say, "Hold your horses. What are his intentions?" If the driver's intentions are to cause highway calamity, one can hardly call his actions stupid or incompetent. Given his intentions, he is wisely acting in a manner to achieve his objectives.



This observation lies at the heart of my colleague Dr. Thomas Sowell's column last week, in which he says, "Pundits who depict Obama as a weak, lame duck president may be greatly misjudging him, as they have so often in the past." After suffering an elective trouncing at the polls, President Barack Obama issued Congress an ultimatum, saying that if it doesn't enact the kind of immigration law that he would like, he will unilaterally issue an executive order to change the nation's immigration laws. This threat, along with other abuses of his office, is not a sign of presidential stupidity or incompetence.

Obama is doing precisely what he promised during his 2008 presidential campaign, to cheering and mesmerized crowds: "We are going to fundamentally change America" and "We will change America. We will change the world." Obama is living up to those pledges by subverting our Constitution and adopting the political style of a banana republic dictator. He showed his willingness to ignore the Constitution when he eliminated the work requirement in welfare reform laws enacted during the Clinton administration. The Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act, otherwise known as Obamacare, was enacted by Congress and hence is the law of the land. Obama has used executive orders to change the law on several occasions. Ask yourself whether our Constitution permits the president to unilaterally change a law enacted by Congress. For a president to do so is for him to behave like a banana republic dictator. As Sowell says, "people who are increasingly questioning Barack Obama's competence are continuing to ignore the alternative possibility that his fundamental values and imperatives are different from theirs."

The recent elections, which gave Republicans control of both houses of Congress, clearly indicate a repudiation of much of Obama's agenda. But the question is whether the Republican majority has the courage to act on that repudiation and stop the president from running roughshod over the Constitution. Because Article 1 of the Constitution grants Congress the power of the purse, there is not much a president can do without a budget appropriation. The question is whether Congress has the guts to exercise its power.

We can rightfully condemn the president for picking and choosing which laws of the land he will obey and which he won't, in violation of the Constitution's Article 2, but is his administration's executive branch that much of an exception to the other branches of the federal government — the legislative and judicial branches?

The legislative branch is bound by Article 1 of the Constitution. Section 8 of Article 1 delineates the



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scope of congressional power to tax and spend. Nowhere within Article 1, Section 8 is Congress granted the authority to tax for at least two-thirds of the federal budget.

The courts are bound by the Constitution's Article 3. Part of the courts' responsibility is to ensure that the executive and legislative branches of government uphold the Constitution. In that respect, the courts have been grossly derelict, particularly during and after the New Deal era.

Seeing as all branches of federal government ignore most of the provisions of the Constitution, I think we can safely say that we've reached the post-Constitution stage of our history. Washington politicians are not to blame. It's the American people who've lost their love and respect for our Constitution. Washington's politicians are simply the agents for that contempt.

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