



Written by [Joe Wolverton, II, J.D.](#) on May 31, 2016

## Is Opposing Federal Overreach “Paranoid” or Patriotic?

On May 21, the *Washington Post* [published an exposé](#) of the so-called “patriot movement.” The paper’s apparent intent was to warn of the potential danger to the homeland posed by these “dangerous, delusional, and sometimes violent” Americans.

The article penned by Kevin Sullivan wastes no time in identifying (subtly, mind you) the real reason these people are preparing to defend their lands, their family, and their faith from a federal government gone rogue.



“Law enforcement officials call them dangerous, delusional and sometimes violent, and they say that their numbers are growing amid a wave of anger at the government that has been gaining strength since 2008, a surge that coincided with the election of the first black U.S. president and a crippling economic recession,” Sullivan writes.

There it is. The dog-eared, well-worn, favorite trick of the Establishment propaganda press: the race card.

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You see, the men and women who recognize that history teaches that free people throughout all ages of human society have had their liberties abolished by overweening “democrats” and “friends of the people” who would stop at nothing to build their own empire, including by enslaving the people they promised to protect, must be racists.

But the *Washington Post* reports that it is Barack Obama’s skin color, not his unconstitutional actions as president, that engendered enmity among Americans suffering under the burden of constant war and the expansion of the welfare state.

Could it be, however, that the reasons so many Americans find themselves fearing their own government are those provided by the *Washington Post* in its catalog of these crimes against the Constitution, namely: “the systematic abuse of land rights, gun rights, freedom of speech, and other liberties”?

One of the Americans worried about the prospect of living in a country where the Constitution is habitually and haughtily disregarded by those who swore to uphold and protect it, puts a beautifully simple and simply beautiful point on the problem. “It doesn’t say in our Constitution that you can’t stand up and defend yourself,” the *Washington Post* quotes B.J. Soper, a leader of a patriot group in Oregon, saying. “We’ve let the government step over the line and rule us, and that was never the intent of this country,” he added.

Of course, those considered by Soper and his colleagues to be the biggest threat to the perpetuation of the Constitution and the American Republic, don’t bother evaluating the merit of Soper’s charges; they merely mock these American patriots, calling them “Y’all Qaeda” and the “Vanilla ISIS.”

These “domestic terrorists,” as the *Washington Post* posits they are looked upon by law enforcement, are extremists who seek nothing less than the dismantling of the despotic federal machine that grinds



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everything into dust within the massive teeth of its tyrannical gears.

One senses from the *Post* piece that these patriots are preparing for war and don't want to hear anything of moderation or peace-making. Not exactly, as even the *Post's* story admits that Soper sought for a happy medium in his mission to force the federal beast back inside its constitutional cage.

The *Post* reports that Soper spent days living in an RV trying to talk protesters at the Burns, Oregon, showdown into "standing down."

It's hard to stand down, though, when one is being shot by law enforcement.

Rather than rehearse the recriminations of Soper and other Americans fed up with a federal government that seems never satiated in its appetite for consuming constitutionally protected rights, the words of the *Washington Post's* Kevin Sullivan will suffice to show the Establishment's disdain for those who feel compelled to preserve the legacy left them by their Founding Fathers.

Here's a list of federal abuses of power cited in the *Washington Post's* article:

- The federal government's siege of Randy Weaver's property in Ruby Ridge, Idaho in 1992 that ended with the killing of two members of the Weaver family by U.S. Marshals.
- The attack on the Branch Davidian property in Waco, Texas in 1993 that resulted in the killing of six residents of the compound by agents of the federal Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms.
- The occupation in 2014 by federal agents of a Nevada ranch owned by Cliven Bundy. While no one was killed during this confrontation, one of Bundy's sons was apprehended by agents of the federal government who held him and reportedly beat him before releasing him.
- The standoff earlier this year between protesters at the Malheur National Wildlife Refuge near Burns, Oregon that took a tragic and unconscionable turn when state troopers shot Robert "Lavoy" Finicum after the car he was riding in was stopped at a joint Oregon State Police/FBI roadblock. Photographic records of that event present conflicting versions of what led to Finicum's being shot to death.

Finally, Soper is quoted in the piece saying something that sounds substantially similar to something spoken by an influential member of the Founding Generation who knew something about a government guilty of "repeated injuries and usurpations, all having in direct object the establishment of an absolute Tyranny over these States."

Writing in 1803, St. George Tucker wrote, commenting on the purpose of the protections set out in the Second Amendment:

This may be considered as the true palladium of liberty. ... The right of self defence [sic] is the first law of nature: in most governments it has been the study of rulers to confine this right within the narrowest limits possible. Wherever standing armies are kept up, and the right of the people to keep and bear arms is, under any colour [sic] or pretext whatsoever, prohibited, liberty, if not already annihilated, is on the brink of destruction.

Perhaps, as the *Washington Post* headline warns, patriots are at the gate. The question isn't are these people dangerous domestic terrorists or the saviors of the Constitution, but whether their accusations of tyranny on behalf of the government of the United States are accurate or are simply the "bizarre and discredited interpretation of the U.S. Constitution and paranoid views of the federal government," as claimed by Bureau of Land Management (BLM) spokesman Tom Gorey in the *Washington Post* article.

The question is critical as its answer will lead some to call for the "alter[ing] or abolish[ing] of the



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current government, and to others insisting that there is so much more the government could do to make America safe if there weren't so many "people having nutty ideas" blocking the way of progress.

As B.J. Soper is quoted as saying at the end of the Kevin Sullivan's story:

"I pray we find some sense of it [common sense in government] again, otherwise a very dark future awaits us, and it is not very far down the road."



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