



Written by [Joe Wolverton, II, J.D.](#) on August 20, 2010

The Disease of Faction and the Constitutional Cure

Earlier in the week, The New American reported that despite his inaugural promise to shutter the prison at Guantanamo Bay “as soon as practicable, and no later than 1 year from the date of this order, some 19 months later the facility remains open.”

In fact, the Obama administration continues committing most of the sins of the Bush era, in defiance of promises of quick and complete atonement for the evil deeds of his predecessor.

A roll call of the Republican policies perpetuated by the Democratic President illustrates the point: open-ended foreign wars? Check. Warrantless wiretapping of U.S. citizens? Check. Torture of “enemy combatants?” Check. Torture by proxy (i.e., extraordinary rendition)? Check. Bush-era violations of civil liberties committed in the name of Homeland Security, all present and accounted for.



What is the point of rehearsing the already well-chronicled fact that President Obama’s recriminations of the behavior of George W. Bush are mere stylistic, rhetorical flourishes designed to satisfy his admirers’ craving for change they can believe in? The pathetic subplot of the pantomime, however, is that the Obamamaniacs know that their patronage of Obama requires the winks and nods of tacit agreements to sustain the status quo.

The Right is just as bad, however. They fill hours of airtime with spewing rage at every word uttered by President Obama or his mouthpieces. If it’s not the nearly Tourette’s-syndrome-like repetition of the President’s middle name, it’s the calling out of his family for their lavish vacations.

Who created, for example, the largest expansion of entitlement programs in the last 40 years? George W. Bush (Medicaid Part D). Who doubled the size of government in eight years? George W. Bush. Who stuck the federal nose deeper than ever into the business of educating children? George W. Bush (No Child Left Behind). This list could go on and on, and every so-called conservative knows it, whether he’d like to admit it or not.

As one demonstrably disinterested writer recently asked: “Regardless of which party is in control, when was the last time a president departed office, leaving behind a federal government smaller than he found it?” Right. Never. The movie of the end of our Republic is a bi-partisan production, with the profits going to financiers who don’t care which letter follows the name of the performers so long as the box office numbers continue strong.

Regardless of the cognitive disconnect between party and policy, there’s little doubt, that the finger-



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wagging Left and the wrist-slapping Right both think they are acting in the best interest of their country. If asked, both partisans would declare their unquestionable patriotism and offer their outrage at the atrocities committed by the “others” as proof of their civic mindedness. Who’s right? Neither of them. They are equally culpable for the gradual and reliable surrender of our nation to an enemy who never fired a shot.

The reason for calling out of the hypocrisy of both sides is to demonstrate how worthless the partisanship is in the quest to restore our Constitutional Republic. We do not need Democrats; we do not need Republicans; we do not need the Tea Party; and we do not need liberals or conservatives.

What we are in desperate need of, however, is constitutionalists — men and women devoted to tirelessly pressing the point of limited government, enumerated powers, federalism, and individual liberty at every opportunity. Citizens untethered from the canned scripts written by the major (or minor) party power brokers will be free to promote the Constitution without fear of being banished from the empire of party allegiance, left alone in the hinterlands of “extremism.”

The devotion to furthering the cause of constitutional liberty must be complete and evangelical. With nearly religious zeal, constitutionalists must preach the good news of republicanism (with a small r) from every pulpit of public opinion made available to them. And, as with any good confessor of the faith, constitutionalists must carry a dog-eared copy of the sacred text (meaning no sacrilege to the word of God) on them at all times.

In the early days of the Roman Republic, there lived a man named Gaius Marcius Coriolanus. In his *Lives*, Plutarch tells the story of this man and his public career that swayed from savior and hero to rebel and outcast of the Eternal City. The Senate of Rome, wishing to distract the attention of the common folk away from the banishment of their hero, Coriolanus, and quell the riots that were flaring up throughout the capital, decided to call for the performance of religious ceremonies and a procession of priests parading through the streets in honor of the local gods.

At the head of the concourse, the Senators and their sacerdotal accomplices would send a herald out front of the promenade calling in a loud voice “*hoc age!*” The meaning of that phrase is “Do This,” a message to the masses to concentrate and apply their minds entirely to demonstrating their heed and devotion to the religious ceremony, which they were gathered to witness. The magistrates and ministers knew that “men as a rule only attend to such matters by putting a certain constraint on their thoughts.”

Hoc age! Do This! This should be the motto of modern constitutionalists. We must be single-minded in our dedication to broadcasting the principles of freedom and limited government as enshrined in our founding charter. We must make a sober and sustained study of the words of our Founders and the men who inspired them one of our highest priorities.

We must turn from participating in the pointless (and programmed) perpetuation of the major party dichotomy. Adhering to the talking points will only dilute the cleansing power of the message: We, the People, are ready to retrench and restore the Constitution to its rightful place in the minds of Americans. And what’s more, we commit to spending our time, treasure, and talents to finding, funding, and electing to office wise men and women who are determined to vote for the immediate elimination of all programs, payments, and wars that are not authorized under the few and very specific powers granted to the national government by the Constitution.

The propagation and preservation of the timeless principles propounded in the Constitution must be our only object. We, as our noble Roman forbearers, must discipline ourselves and focus our energy on the



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unwavering demand that our government be reduced in size and scope to within the very bright boundaries laid out in the Constitution.

From this day forward, *Hoc age!*

Photo of Guantanamo Bay: AP Images



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