

I Don't Watch the News

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Usually when I hear someone say, "I Don't Watch the News," it is followed by something like, "It's too depressing." While that may well be true, it is a truly dangerous stance to adopt. Not watching the news may well protect you from the anger or depression associated with it and it may protect you from feeling hopeless and helpless, but it also means that whatever comfort or happiness that protection offers is a flat out lie.

In fact, in 1776, the equivalent of being able to watch the news was the reasoning behind that part of the first amendment which addresses "The News." The sentence is very complex, so I diagrammed it and removed the irrelevant phrases. It reads the same: "Congress shall make no law ... abridging the freedom of ... the press."

The reason was to advance and protect the admonitions of both Madison and Jefferson that the electorate become and remain well informed regarding the activities of their government. Madison wrote, "Knowledge will forever govern ignorance; and a people who mean to be their own governors must arm themselves with the power which knowledge gives." The implications are clear. People who don't watch the news are powerless to prevent the expansion and eventual dominance of the government.

Not watching the news means that you don't know which politician did a political favor for which campaign donor. It means that you don't know that several large corporations donate to both sides of a campaign in order to assure favor no matter who wins.

Not watching the news means that you are probably unaware that a person first elected as a middle class American can easily become a millionaire at the end of only a few sessions in office.

You might never know that a court has ruled that foreign nationals and nations can donate to internal campaigns and elections of the United States.

You might never know that in some states, illegal aliens are allowed to vote.

You might not know that certain government agencies have financial interests (stock holdings) in the private corporations which they regulate. In fact, there is now an ongoing dispute over whether or not the NIH actually owns a portion of the Moderna COVID Vaccine. Knowing this causes one to wonder about the ethics of a regulatory organization owning even a small part of the product it regulates.

One federal agency has gone so far as to direct a county sheriff not to enforce a particular law.

You might not know that more than 90% of all financial transactions go through only a handful of big banks, creating a financial monopoly.

You might not know that the United States Capitol Police Department is opening branch offices in large cities, such as Tampa, or that the Capitol Police are exempt from the Freedom of Information Act and can conduct its business in complete secrecy.

Would you be surprised if you learned that many of the inter-agency cooperative agreements between local Sheriffs and the Immigration and Customs Enforcement Agency have been cancelled?

Not watching the news means you don't know that China is filling in coral reefs in the South China Sea. Even if you don't care about the destruction of the reef, there are implications worth examining. By creating island from reefs, the Chinese 200 mile economic zone increases and all the fish and natural resources become the property of China.

Would it bother you to learn that one attempt to side-step the Second Amendment was a proposal to put an absurdly high tax on the sale of ammunition? Or that the United Nations has, on more than one occasion, proposed a direct income tax on American Citizens? And that would be in addition to what we already pay?

Are you aware of what Civil Asset Forfeiture is or that no warrants, probable cause, or refunds are required? How about what an "Unrealized Gains Tax" is? Or that our government funds research on dogs that is so painful that the dogs are put into a coma to keep them from howling?

If you don't watch the news, are you aware that courts have ruled that a government can take your land and give it to someone else who promises to build on it – not because it's needed for a highway, but just to increase the property tax revenue?

While it is true that all or most of us hate politics, I've said for years that "Hating Politics is the very best reason in the world to become engaged in politics." It won't change on its own. And I know that we all get a vote, but if you don't watch the news, how are we to know when to write a letter to our Congressman? Or what to tell him or her? How are you going to decide on whom to vote? Campaign Ads? They're pretty unreliable as sources of information. As I've said before, "It's your right to vote. It's your responsibility to vote wisely." And, "You can't get wisdom from a [campaign] billboard."

Not watching the news protects you ... right up until it's too late. In fact, not watching or reading the news is analogous to closing your eyes and imagining that you are on a tropical island, never hearing the commands, "Ready ... aim ... fire"

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