

IT'S OUR FAULT

By Thomas R. Cuba

There has been much discussion recently about the Power of the government, in particular the Federal Government. We need to examine this, but first a little history.

Our founders were very careful with the allocation of governmental responsibilities. It is apparent that they had a very clear understanding of the difference between Power and Authority. In the Constitution, all authority is vested in the Federal government by the act of ratification by the States. Most importantly, that authority was widely dispersed. Each office and branch is limited. The limitation is often referred to as a Balance of power but it is really a dispersal or distribution such that no one person or small group of people could ever gain total control. Even the embedded processes such as "advice and consent" or "ratification" and "budgeting" were distributed.

Still, over the years, government has slowly accumulated authorities by taking it from others under the guise of doing things for the good of the people. Authority has been centralized, in perception if not fact, in Presidents and Governors. The concentrated authority has become a basis for actual power.

It is, unfortunately, we citizens, who have allowed this to happen. Power is being lost by an inattentive and apathetic people. We have allowed party loyalty to concentrate political power under a few party leaders. We have allowed our ignorance of the constitution to lead us to call more and more on the President or our respective Governors to solve problems using tools rightly delegated to others such as the House or the Senate.

In our failure to understand the cornerstone of the constitution, the distribution of power, we created the monster. We concentrated the power into the Presidency and to the Governors and Mayors. We concentrated the power under the Federal Government. It is now our responsibility to set it right. Our failures have reduced Congress to nothing more than minions of the party and the sitting President. When a true Representative comes along, in most circumstances he is called rogue and outcast. He is stripped of committees and influence. He is isolated by those who have collected the power, and we fail to object. Representative Government has been reduced to a team sport played out between the parties and we have been reduced to spectators. Like the spectators we have become, we praise or blame the President or Governor just as we do a coach or owner. We fail to see that all members of the team must be in the game. Each must live up to his constitutional responsibilities. We have collected the dispersed authorities and demanded that they be put into the hands of the few. We need to get this straight.

To begin the repair process, we must all acknowledge that we do have the Power to shape our government into a government that we want, instead of one we endure. We can delegate its Authority but we should never, ever delegate it our Power.

It is time to Redistribute POWER not wealth.

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