

Tuesday, September 22, 2009

Why U.S. is and Should Be a Republic, Not a Democracy

I recently wrote a post titled [United States is a Republic, Not a Democracy](#). It is interesting that whether or not the U.S. is a democracy, republic, or some other form of government is even open to debate. However, considering that politicians, teachers, and others throw around the term democracy so loosely, it should not be a complete surprise I suppose.

After posting the original article on my Twitter account [@tkinder](#) I received a reply from [@kalimkassam](#) stating:

Y wld a federal republic have 2 directly-elected chambers? Wht abt universal suffrage? These (and many more) r marks of democracy.

These are interesting points, but none of them change the fact that the United States is a Representative Republic. Some refer to the United States as a Democratic Republic. Whichever term you prefer, elections, universal suffrage, etc. do not make our country a democracy. We elect representatives who make decisions on our behalf. If the United States was a democracy, we would vote directly on issues, including laws. There would not be a need for a court system, as the people would decide the fate of the accused. Eventually, courts and legislative bodies would wither away and die.

However, we live in a republic. We have a Constitution that outlines our rights and protects them from infringement from the government. Interestingly, [@kalimkassam](#) referred to the United States as a federal republic. I don't know exactly what he meant by that, but I'm fairly sure I don't want to live in a federal republic. That sounds too much like a system of government dominated by the federal government in Washington, DC. Maybe we already live in a federal republic. Certainly that is the imbalance that the tea parties oppose. One of the primary reasons, in my opinion, that we have arrived at this imbalance, is encapsulated in another point [@kalimkassam](#) made. The United States Senate is directly elected by the people. This is a result of the 17th Amendment to the Constitution. This was a monumental mistake and needs to be undone by the people. By directly electing Senators the United States tipped the balance of power away from the states and toward the federal government.

The House of Representatives was supposed to represent the will of the people. The Senate was created to represent the will of the individual states. Unfortunately, the direct election of Senators has allowed the Senate to thwart the will of the states by imposing federal government mandates at every turn. If the state legislatures appointed, or otherwise selected Senators, it is doubtful that the Senate would impose unfunded mandates on states and would likely be more mindful of the proper balance between states and the federal government in our system of federalism.

If we value our liberty and freedom, we must restore the proper balance between the federal and state governments. That will require that candidates run for state legislatures who are committed to the Constitution and will oppose the federal government's continued violations of our rights. Too many in Congress are either ignorant about the Constitution or choose to ignore it. In order to win the day, we must oppose them at every turn. Part of that battle is to inform the people about our form of government. Those who incorrectly identify our system as democracy are either ignorant about the true nature of our Constitution or seek to implement another system in its place. We cannot allow that to happen.

Posted by Terry Kinder in Blog at 01:23