



Straight Talk

by Muriel Sluyter

Do Pansies Have Any Rights?

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Greetings, Gentle Reader,

When our nation was organized, the people created the Constitution to protect them. From what? Their own government!

They had first hand experience with a king, parliament and military, whose goal was to control the citizenry by whatever means necessary. They knew that the primary threat to any people lay in their own government, rather than from external enemies. They were determined to create a structure that would keep the people in a position of power over the government. That structure was the Constitution.

Should modern Americans worry about government, whether city, county, state or federal?

Absolutely! Especially when any of the above governments force them to fight for the privilege of running their own lives. Any government with that much power can and will deny citizens the right to self-determination. Almost all humans have a tendency to abuse authority. Being a part of government encourages an inflated sense of power, followed by contempt for constituents' rights.

Lord Acton said that power tends to corrupt, then he added these wise but tragic words, "...absolute power corrupts absolutely." That's why America still needs a constitution.

It was designed to allow the federal government only enough power to protect the people from foreign invaders and to ensure domestic tranquility. Originally, the people were so distrustful of government--and rightly so--that they didn't give it authority to collect enough money to make its currency good. The expression, "not worth a Continental dollar" was no flight of whimsy. The government could print money, but oftentimes couldn't guarantee its monetary value.

Have modern Americans honored the responsibility the founders gave them to keep their various governments in check? No! Not only have we foolishly elected politicians who promise us the moon if only we will give them power, we don't seem to notice the amount of money they take

from our pockets to finance those promises. Light-fingered Louie, the pick pocket, has nothing on a goodly proportion of politicians.

But that's not the worst. Americans have allowed local governments to adopt controls and regulations that have deprived us of our most basic freedoms. They tell us how to build our houses, how to run our businesses, how to manage our land, how to school our children, how to practice our religion and how to run almost every other facet of our lives. Many developers tell those who buy their lots what floor plans they can have and how their houses must look. In some cases, a home owner cannot build a fence around his yard, unless his neighbor agrees to the materials, the height of the fence and the construction thereof.

How did we ever get to be such pansies? We Westerners used to be so independent that we wouldn't allow tinhorn despots to run our lives, but now, they move into town, we vote them into office, then we lie down so they can roll over us with their rules and regulations, without having to strain themselves too much.

Some silly goof moves into the area and tells us that we won't be safe in our homes and businesses unless we impose building codes enforced by an inspector with tyrannical powers, so one town after another does precisely that. Sure enough, businesses are already being closed down.

We seem to have lost our good sense at the same time we lost our backbone. Our tough-as-boot-leather forebears must be horrified at what we have become. Our constitutional form of government, from top to bottom, is under attack by the very people it was designed to protect. Only a nation of gutless pansies would allow that to happen.

Will the real Americans please stand up? If there are any left, that is.