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A Lawyer's Thoughts On Independence Day

By BILL FABER

Roots of the Republic

When darkness fell on Christmas Day 1776, General George Washington led his band of citizen soldiers across the Delaware River.

At daylight the American army attacked the Hessian troops stationed near Trenton. Washington's men took the fort and all its supplies. The victory turned the tide of the American Revolution.

Independence Day Calls To America

Liberty and democracy require lots of hard work. The truth is that the government is "you". And you are the democracy.

I acknowledge the disconnect between politician and citizen. For example, polls show that 80% of voters want single payer health insurance - Medicare for all. Yet the politicians say "no".

Some people say they don't get involved with politics because it's dirty or it's beneath them or it won't make any difference. And so they let the crooks rule.

But politics is not like a film at the Avon Theater that you can choose to watch or ignore. Politics directly affects your life whether you are involved or whether you are remote. Aristotle said, "If the good men do not govern themselves, then the evil men will." Our republic cries out for its citizens to save her.



I call that person *citizen* who understands that community is the focus of politics - "All for one and one for all." The community's true purpose is to nurture its children and comfort its infirmed. The Old Testament prophets repeated the command that fulfillment of the covenant required a concern for the weak and deprived.

I call that person *citizen* who accepts the responsibility of liberty; the man or woman who enters the fray of politics in an effort to influence the future of his children and grandchildren. The theologian Paul Tillich taught that a genuine practice of religion demanded interaction with society and government.

I call that person *citizen* who respects workers and their families. The lay-off of millions of workers serves as compelling evidence that the bosses hold no commitment or loyalty to workers. Workers must be allowed to easily form unions to serve as a counter-balance to the political power of the greedy bosses of Wall Street.

I call that person *citizen*

who demands the return of manufacturing to America's shores. America must create a new industrial plan to regenerate manufacturing jobs. To let U.S. corporations give American jobs to Chinese peasants is treason. History teaches that only nations that manufacture goods can rule the oceans.

I call that person *citizen* who sees the peril of the military-private contractor complex. When this nation goes to war, it's battle must be fought by citizen soldiers, not armed private contractors. Rome learned that a private army holds no good.

Democracy demands stoicism and sacrifice. A cold north wind of the depression grips our town. Now is not the time for cheerleaders. Now is the time for Decatur citizens to force their political leaders to listen to the people.

When General Washington asked his citizen soldiers to face the dangers of the crossing of the Delaware, he understood that liberty carries responsibility.

Citizens, resolve this Independence Day to rededicate yourself to the work of your nation. Get informed and get involved with local government. Your children's future is at stake. May God bless America, land of the free. Thanks for listening.

Bill Faber is a Decatur lawyer with 29 years experience trying serious injury cases. He welcomes your comments 425-9002.