

Countdown to 250 - Critiquing Leftist and Rightwing Views Yields Path Forward for All - Peter Berkowitz via RCP on Rescuing The Declaration From Left- And Right-Wing Polemics; Keen MHVille FEA

The truth is wherever you happen to find it and sometimes it is from surprising sources. As soon as someone closes their minds to a potential insight due to the source, a close-minded person may be robbing themselves of something valuable. Regardless of any political or apolitical stances, the U.S. is inexorably counting down to its 250th anniversary of the Declaration of Independence. Peter Berkowitz via left-right balanced *RealClearPolitics* (RCP) and its *RealClearWire* published an article entitled “**Rescuing the Declaration From Left- and Right-Wing Polemics.**” On a near daily (often multiple times daily) basis, MHProNews checks left-leaning MSN, the eclectic ZeroHedge financial/news site (where this article was also published), and RCP among others that span the left-right media divide. It is left-leaning Bing's artificial intelligence (AI) powered Copilot that said that MHProNews demonstrably and uniquely uses sources across the left-right divide. This results in a balance, per third-party Copilot. It is part of the mix of content that aims to inform our readers of the realities of not only MHVille, but also the macro-economic forces that can and do push manufactured housing into a tiny subset of housing instead of the far larger share of the housing market this industry used to enjoy. Without a balanced perspective, there is little chance that clarity of understanding will emerge. Why? Because there is not only a monopoly on money - meaning an access to capital - but also a monopoly on information as well - meaning an access to dependable "Industry News, Tips, and Views Pros Can Use."® Because not only is truth where you find it, but falsehoods are also where you find them.

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Quote from the full length and award-winning ***"Shadows of Liberty"*** documentary drama. ***Shadows*** exposed several aspects of the political, media, corporate, and regulatory nexus by interviewing insiders involved in it. It explores examples from left and right with the impact of money and information manipulation. Glover has served on a Warren Buffett funded board. <https://www.manufacturedhomepronews.com/danny-glover-and-revealing-manufactured-housing-realities-power-of-correct-questions-and-observations-regardless-of-good-bad-laughable-or-no-reply-plus-sunday-manufactured-home-weekly-r/> See the Illusory Effect updates linked here: <https://www.manufacturedhomepronews.com/when-the-lies-are-so-big-no-one-would->

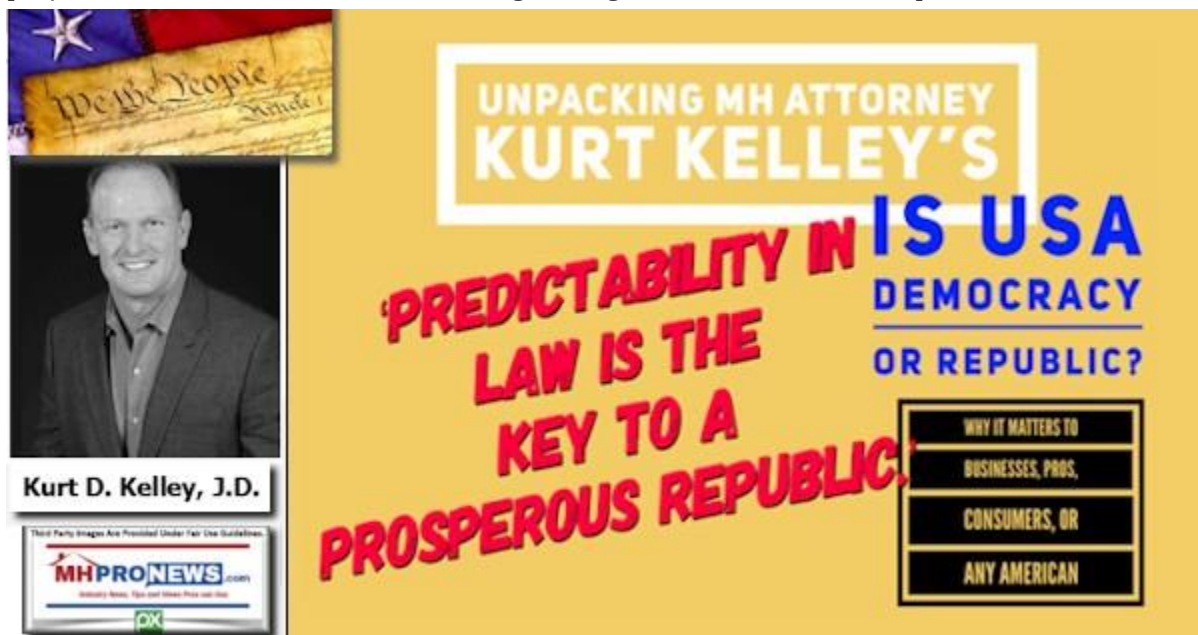
dare-disbelieve-them-mainstream-legacy-or-alternative-media-u-s-public-policies-illusory-truth-and-manufactured-housing-plus-mhville-mark/ [/caption]

Part I of today's report will be from Berkowitz, who per his bio in brief:

Peter Berkowitz is the Tad and Dianne Taube senior fellow at the Hoover Institution, Stanford University. From 2019 to 2021, he served as director of the Policy Planning Staff at the U.S. State Department.

Part II will provide additional facts-evidence-analysis (FEA) and more *MHProNews* commentary. Note that the quote below from Kurt Kelley, J.D., helps us frame one of the reasons that this topic is important. When the law is predictable, when public policy is predictable, then confidence in investing, business policies, employment pay or opportunities are clarified. Because the power to tax is the power to destroy, taxation and regulation, governmental borrowing and spending are all among the factors that impact the marketplace *MHVille* operates in.

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<https://www.manufacturedhomepronews.com/unpacking-mh-attorney-kurt-kelleys-predictability-in-law-is-the-key-to-a-prosperous-republic-is-usa-democracy-or-republic-why-it-matters-to-businesses-pros-consumers-or/> [/caption]

With that plan of action, let's dive in.

Part I

Rescuing the Declaration From Left- and Right-Wing Polemics

By [Peter Berkowitz](#)

July 20, 2025

Progressive left and postliberal right intellectuals converge in teaching scorn for America's founding principles. Attacking from different angles, both camps employ grossly flawed arguments to justify the repudiation of the U.S. Declaration of Independence's ringing affirmation 249 years ago of the unalienable rights that human beings share. Captive to the taste for the gaudy and the melodramatic nurtured by American higher education, both camps want to revalue traditional values, change the world rather than understand it, and replace history's complexities with simplistic grand narratives of good and evil. At the same time, their wild exaggerations, contrived charges, and enthusiastic followings provide an occasion to restate America's founding principles, recognize their pertinence to the enduring challenges of free and democratic self-government, and rebuild civic education around them.

[The 1619 Project](#) prominently set forth a version of the progressive left's signature opinion that systemic racism disfigures America. Published in the summer of 2019 as a special issue of The New York Times Magazine, the collection of essays undertook to correct the record about America's founding.

Led by Nikole Hannah-Jones, who won a Pulitzer Prize for her contribution, 1619 Project essayists argued that the United States was not truly founded in July 1776 when the Declaration of Independence proclaimed, "these United Colonies are, and of Right ought to be Free and Independent States." Rather, America came into being in 1619 when 20 enslaved Africans arrived in the fledgling British territory of Virginia.

Abolished in 1865 by the 13th Amendment, the evil institution of slavery was always a grotesque affront to the equality in unalienable rights affirmed by the Declaration. Nevertheless, according to the 1619 Project, slavery forms the deepest substratum of American existence, has touched every aspect of the United States, and remains the defining fact of the nation's life. In the 1619 Project's telling, the Declaration of Independence's self-evident truths about individual rights and the consent of the governed were always so much window-dressing designed to distract from and thereby perpetuate slavery. Yet it seems lost on 1619 Project producers, distributors, and consumers that

despite the resentments and distrust that currently wrack the nation, the United States remains by most any objective measure the freest, most tolerant, and most prosperous multi-religious, multi-racial, and multi-ethnic great power in history.

Approaching matters from the opposite side of the political spectrum but with similar vehemence, “Why Liberalism Failed,” a 2017 volume by University of Notre Dame political science professor Patrick Deneen, elaborates the postliberal right’s characteristic view that freedom in America has produced a systemically corrupt and decadent society. The chief villain, according to Deneen, is John Locke. But to convict Locke of subverting Western civilization in general and America in particular, Deneen reduces the 17th-century British thinker, and indeed the entirety of the modern tradition of freedom, to a tendentious reading of a few lines from the opening pages of his 1689 classic, “The Second Treatise of Government.”

Locke’s great sin, in Deneen’s account, involves giving authoritative expression to the proposition – central to the Declaration and a cornerstone of American constitutional government – that human beings are by nature free and equal. The proper political expression of this equality in freedom, maintains Locke, consists in liberty under settled laws enacted, enforced, and adjudicated within a constitutional order to which one has consented.

Deneen, however, attributes a dark secret teaching to Locke, according to which Lockean freedom entails emancipation from the imperatives of virtue, duty, and nature’s and God’s law. For Deneen, Lockean freedom, and therefore American freedom from the beginning and in its essence, gives rise to an incoherent and inhuman demand for the chimera of absolute freedom. Deneen does not allow his polemic to be sidetracked by such core components of Locke’s thinking as his insistence on the duty to honor God’s authority, his distinction between liberty and license, and his 1693 book, “Some Thoughts Concerning Education,” which deals with the virtues and how parents should foster them.

In America’s universities, many students will encounter the progressive left’s and postliberal right’s vilification of America’s founding principles instead of receiving a proper introduction to the case *for* the Declaration and the Constitution. For such students and indeed for citizens whose instincts, sentiments, and experience tell them that America’s founding principles sustain the nation, Vincent Phillip Muñoz provides an excellent tonic in “[The American Revolutions of 1776](#),” which appears in the summer issue of National Affairs.

A professor of political science at the University of Notre Dame (like Deneen), Muñoz tactfully understates matters in observing that “As America’s 250th anniversary approaches,

not everyone is eager to celebrate the Declaration of Independence and the political revolution it sparked.” His essay, a version of which will appear in the American Enterprise Institute’s forthcoming volume “[Religion and the American Revolution](#)” – part of AEI’s “America at 250” initiative (I contributed to an earlier [volume](#) in the series) – briskly lays out three revolutionary achievements of 1776. These achievements deserve our gratitude, warrant celebration, and suffer suppression by or exclusion from university curricula. All three champion unalienable or natural rights and the limited government that secures them.

The first revolution of 1776 affirmed that just government is grounded in the consent of the governed. Without questioning God’s authority, the American view broke with the then-prevalent notion that legitimate political authority derives from divine right. And without challenging the classical premise that citizens should govern and be governed in accordance with human nature, America’s founders rejected the classical idea that wisdom or moral virtue provides decisive title to rule.

America’s founders held that while human beings are not equal in all respects and not free in all ways, we are born equal in rights and therefore neither masters over nor subordinate to others. Each has equal right to govern himself or herself, but no one has the right to govern another. One crucial exercise of the right to govern oneself consists in consenting to the exercise of political authority. In practice, that means that each has an obligation to obey only those laws – the disagreeable as well as the agreeable – that issue from established constitutional processes to which he or she has consented. Consent can be given expressly, as in the formal ceremonies by which immigrants officially acquire citizenship, or tacitly, as in the manner of the native-born who acquire the obligation to obey the laws through living under them and enjoying their benefits.

The second revolution of 1776 taught that government’s primary purpose is to secure natural or unalienable rights. America’s founders parted ways with the traditional view that government’s purpose was to perfect or save souls, but the parting was not driven by indifference or hostility to higher concerns. Rather, the founders proceeded from the conviction that care of the soul was the proper responsibility of individuals, families, and religious institutions.

Securing rights did not preclude government from assuming additional responsibilities, provided that they were consistent with the equal rights of all, to advance the common good. “Unlike influential progressive thinkers such as Herbert Croly and political leaders such as Franklin Roosevelt, the founders did not hold that a fundamental purpose of government is to provide directly for the people’s material needs or to ameliorate all unfortunate circumstances,” Muñoz writes. “They instead understood the role of

government as securing the conditions, including the economic conditions, that would allow Americans to be responsible – to employ their natural rights to provide for themselves, their families, and those under their care.”

The third revolution of 1776 maintained that religious liberty, the right of individuals to worship in accordance with conscience, was an essential right. Far from expressing or implying antipathy to religion, limiting government’s authority over religious belief and practice stemmed from a determination to protect faith. Prohibiting government from establishing religion or impairing its free exercise reflected the belief that true religion could not be dictated by civil law because it was grounded in conscience and choice. Another reason to restrict political control over religion was the distinct tendency of government officials to lack competence in interpreting scripture and managing religious teaching and observance.

From the founders’ perspective, moreover, the spirit of liberty and the spirit of religion were not political antagonists but rather political allies. In their view, since human beings are by nature free and equal and endowed with reason, only faith practiced in accordance with conscience could be pleasing to God. And because the numerous Christian denominations at the founding affirmed that every human being is precious in God’s eyes and that power must be divided between church and state, religion in America bolstered the nation’s natural rights principles.

These three revolutionary achievements of 1776 – grounding just government in citizens’ consent, focusing government on securing rights, and protecting religious liberty out of respect for faith – deserve to be widely heralded in next year’s celebrations of the Declaration of Independence’s 250th anniversary. And study of their origins, integration into American constitutional government, and implications for today’s challenges should promptly be placed at the center of civic education in America.

This article was originally published by RealClearPolitics and made available via RealClearWire.

Part II

MHPProNews notes that the following are in no particular order of importance.

1) There are many possible takeaways from the article by Peter Berkowitz. But helpful in unpacking his insights is an understanding of the man. He is described by [left-leaning Wikipedia](#) as follows. "Peter Berkowitz is an American political scientist and legal scholar.

In 2019–2021, he served as the Director of Policy Planning at the United States Department of State.

Born: 1959 (age 66 years), [United States](#)

Education: [Yale University](#), [Swarthmore College](#), [The Hebrew University of Jerusalem](#), [Yale Law School](#)

Party: [Republican Party](#)

Previous office: [Director of Policy Planning Staff of the United States \(2019–2021\)](#)."

Per his website, about Berkowitz.

He has written hundreds of [articles, essays and reviews](#) on a range of subjects for a variety of publications, including The American Interest, the American Political Science Review, The Atlantic, The Chronicle of Higher Education, the Claremont Review of Books, Commentary, First Things, Forbes.com, Haaretz, The Jerusalem Post, the London Review of Books, National Journal, National Review, The New Criterion, The New Republic, Policy Review, Politico, The Public Interest, the Times Literary Supplement, The Wall Street Journal, the Washington Post, The Weekly Standard, The Wilson Quarterly, and the Yale Law Journal.

In addition to teaching regularly in the United States and Israel, Dr. Berkowitz has led seminars on the principles of freedom and the American constitutional tradition for students from Burma at the George W. Bush Presidential Center and for Korean students at Underwood International College at Yonsei University in Seoul, South Korea.

He taught constitutional law and jurisprudence at George Mason University School of Law from 1999 to 2006, and political philosophy in the department of government at Harvard University from 1990 to 1999.

He holds a JD and a PhD in political science from Yale University; an MA in philosophy from the Hebrew University of Jerusalem; and a BA in English literature from Swarthmore College.

Per his website, Berkowitz is the author of: "[Constitutional Conservatism](#)" which is described by left-leaning Amazon as follows.

Constitutional Conservatism: Liberty, Self-Government, and Political Moderation (Hoover Institution Press Publication)

Peter Berkowitz identifies the political principles social conservatives and libertarians share, or should share, and sketches the common ground on which they can and should join forces. Drawing on the writings of Edmund Burke, *The Federalist*, and the high points of post-World War II American conservatism, he argues that the top political priority for social conservatives and libertarians should be to rally around the principles of liberty embodied in the US Constitution and pursue reform in light of them.

Per his website and Amazon, he is also the author of the following volume.

Israel and the Struggle over the International Laws of War (Koret-taube Task Force on National Security and Law)

The author argues that Israel stands on the frontlines of a new struggle over the international laws of war and exposes abuses of law that have been promulgated by international human rights lawyers, UN bodies, and intellectuals to illegitimately circumscribe the right of liberal democracies to defend themselves against transnational terrorists. The Goldstone Report, which was published by the United Nations in September 2009, and the Gaza flotilla controversy, which erupted at the end of May 2010, are examples of those abuses. This book criticizes the flawed assumptions and defective claims arising from both the Goldstone Report and the Gaza flotilla controversy, showing how the legal principles and conclusions advanced by many of Israel's critics threaten not only Israel's national security interests but the United States' as well.

So, while Berkowitz is apparently from the political right, he has also been published by notable left-leaning publications, such as the *Washington Post*, *Politico*, and the *Atlantic*.

2) Quoting Berkowitz from the RCP article above.

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America's founders held that while human beings are not equal in all respects and not free in all ways, we are born equal in rights and therefore neither masters over nor subordinate to others. Each has equal right to govern himself or herself, but no one has the right to govern another. One crucial exercise of the right to govern oneself consists in consenting to the exercise of political authority. In practice, that means that each has an obligation to obey only those laws – the disagreeable as well as the agreeable – that issue from established constitutional processes to which he or she has consented.

The second revolution of 1776 taught that government's primary purpose is to secure natural or unalienable rights.

The third revolution of 1776 maintained that religious liberty, the right of individuals to worship in accordance with conscience, was an essential right.

From the founders' perspective, moreover, the spirit of liberty and the spirit of religion were not political antagonists but rather political allies.

MHProNews has shed light on some of these issues previously, by showcasing famous quotes like the one below.

**Let us with caution indulge
the supposition that
morality can be maintained
without religion. Reason and
experience both forbid us to
expect that national morality
can prevail in exclusion of
religious principle.**

~

George Washington

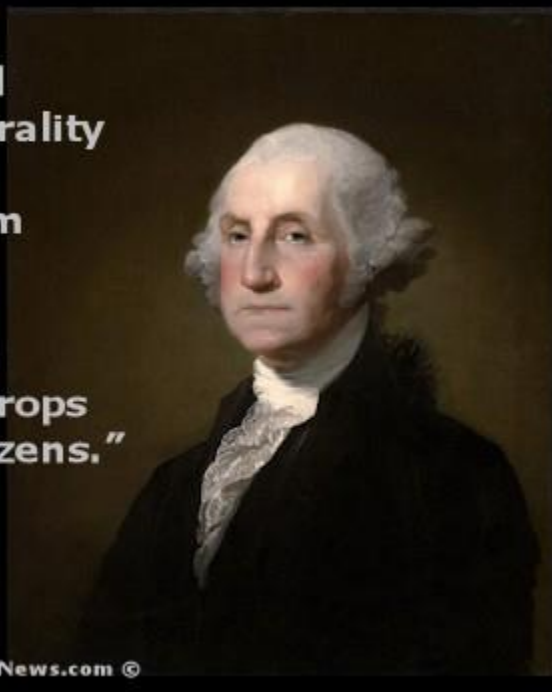
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"Of all the dispositions and habits which lead to political prosperity. Religion and morality are indispensable supports. In vain would that man claim the tribute of Patriotism who should labor to subvert these great Pillars of human happiness — these firmest props of the duties of Men and citizens."

**- George Washington,
Farewell Address -
September 19, 1796 A.D.**

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[caption id="attachment_217706" align="aligncenter" width="597"]

A portrait of John Adams, an older man with white hair, wearing a brown coat and a white cravat. He is looking slightly to the right.

John Adams

[I]t is religion and morality alone which can establish the principles upon which freedom can securely stand. The only foundation of a free constitution is pure virtue.

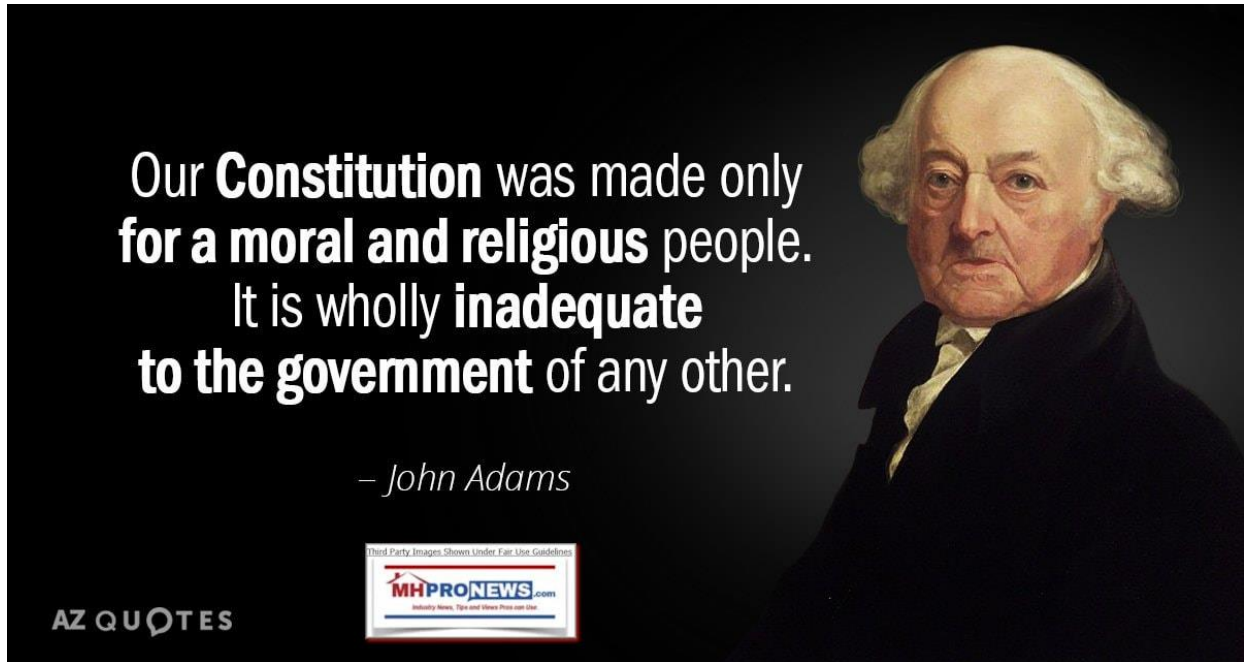
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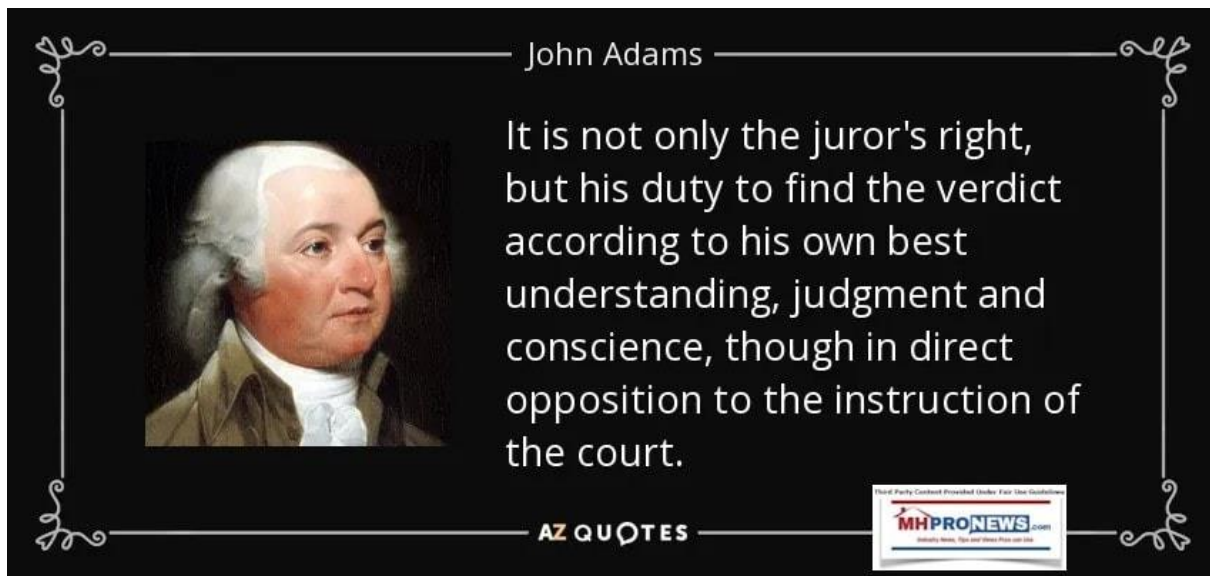
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To underscore the points made by Berkowitz, is this reminder that our legal system is predicated on jury power. MHPProNews has uniquely reported on the key role that each juror, not just the jury as a pool, have as a check against bad laws.

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There are scores of such quotes, including in case law, that underscores the historic and enduring right for a juror to act according to his or her conscience, even if it defies judge's instructions or means "nullifying" the law in question in a given case. [/caption]

Examples of Legal References to Jury Nullification



"It is not only [the juror's] right, but his duty...to find the verdict according to his own best understanding, judgment, and conscience, though in direct opposition to the direction of the court."

- John Adams, 1771

"It is presumed, that juries are the best judges of facts; it is, on the other hand, presumed that courts are the best judges of law. But still both objects are within your power of decision...you have a right to take it upon yourselves to judge of both, and to determine the law as well as the fact in controversy."

- Chief Justice John Jay, *Georgia v. Brailsford*, 1794

"The jury has the power to bring a verdict in the teeth of both the law and the facts."

- Justice Oliver Wendell Holmes, *Horning v. District of Columbia*, 1920

"An unjust law is no law at all... To put it in the terms of Saint Thomas Aquinas, an unjust law is a human law that is not rooted in eternal and natural law."

- Martin Luther King, Jr., "Letter from a Birmingham Jail," 1963.

[The jury has an] "...unreviewable and irreversible power...to acquit in disregard of the instructions on the law given by the trial judge...The pages of history shine on instances of the jury's exercise of its prerogative to disregard uncontradicted evidence and instructions of the judge; for example, acquittals under the fugitive slave law."

- D.C. Circuit Court of Appeals, *United States v. Dougherty*, 1972

3) Rights come from God, in the founders' view. The separation of church and state was meant to be a barrier for the state to not interfere or impose a religion on the people.

Per Gemini.

Yes, the concept of separation of church and state in the United States, primarily derived from the First Amendment's Establishment Clause, is intended to prevent the government from interfering with religious freedom and also to prevent the government from establishing a state religion or favoring one religion over another. This means the government cannot dictate religious practices or beliefs, nor can it endorse or support any specific religion.

Here's a more detailed breakdown:

- **The Establishment Clause:**

This clause in the First Amendment prohibits the government from establishing a state religion or endorsing any particular religion.

- **"A wall of separation":**

This famous phrase, coined by Thomas Jefferson, is often used to describe the desired relationship between church and state, emphasizing the need for a clear distinction between the two.

- **Protecting religious freedom:**

The separation of church and state ensures that individuals are free to practice their own religion (or no religion) without government interference.

- **Preventing government overreach:**

It also prevents the government from becoming overly entangled with religious institutions, which could lead to coercion or the suppression of religious minorities.

- **Historical context:**

The founding fathers, having experienced religious persecution in Europe, sought to create a system where religious freedom was protected, according to the U.S. National Park Service (.gov).

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separation of church and state was meant to keep government out of religion

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AI Overview

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Separation of Church & State History - National Park Service
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National Park Service

Establishment Clause | Separation of Church and State
Oct 17, 2023
Free Speech Center

Separation of Church and State | Wex - Law.Cornell.Edu
Separation of church and state is a legal doctrine in the United States primarily derived from the Establishment Clause of the...
LII | Legal Information Institute

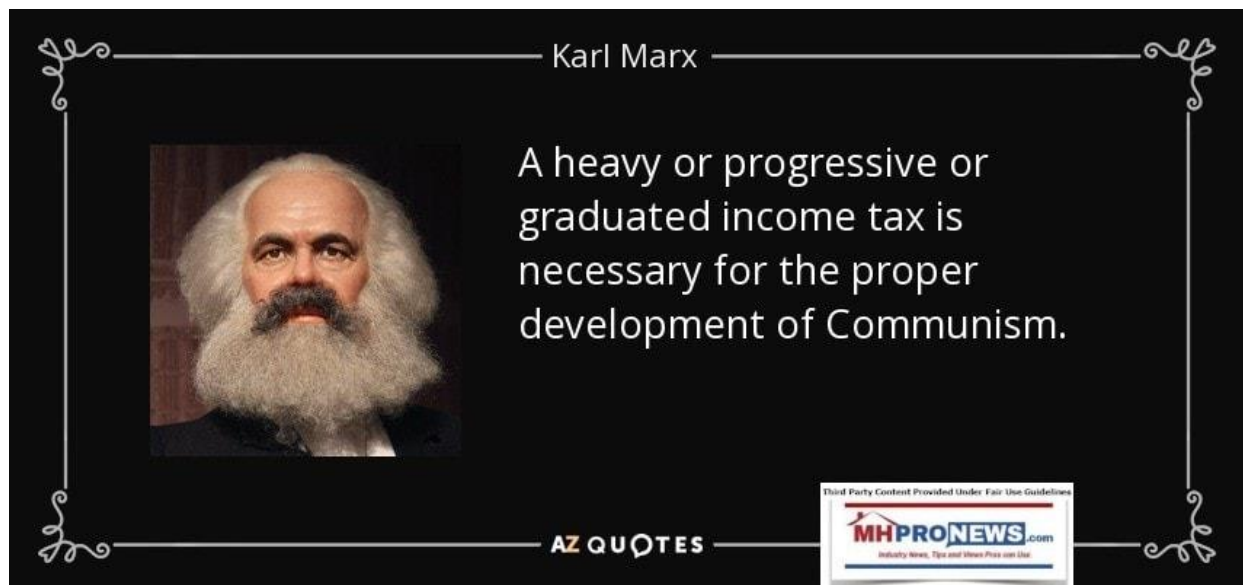
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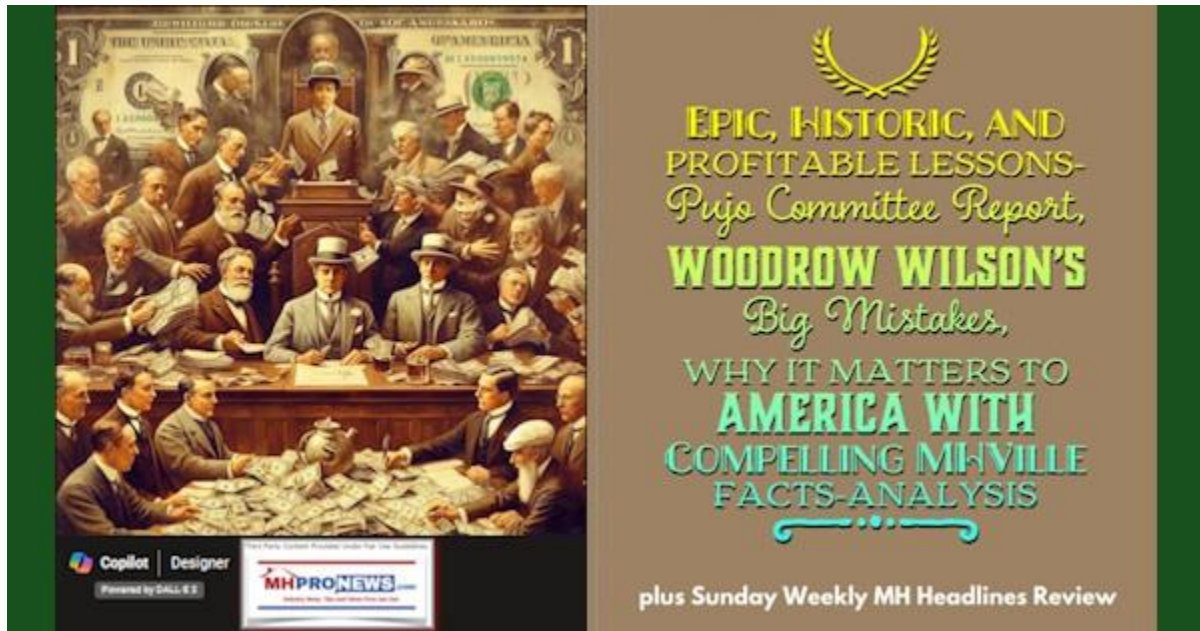
4) The "racist" Woodrow Wilson (D) Administration in several respects began a fundamental change, which some would argue was contrary to the U.S.A.'s founding principles. For example.

- By changing the Constitution and providing for the direct election of senators by the people instead of having the appointed by the states to represent state interests in the federal government (as was originally true), states' rights were arguably weakened.
- By moving away from tariffs and imposing an income tax, protection of American businesses and American workers was arguably undermined, and a more intrusive form of taxation that was based on a teaching of Karl Marx - the income tax - took the place of tariffs.
- Government was seen as a place where experts or elites in their field were to guide society.
- Regulation and agencies began to grow.



- Wilson also pivoted away from keeping the U.S. out of European conflicts.

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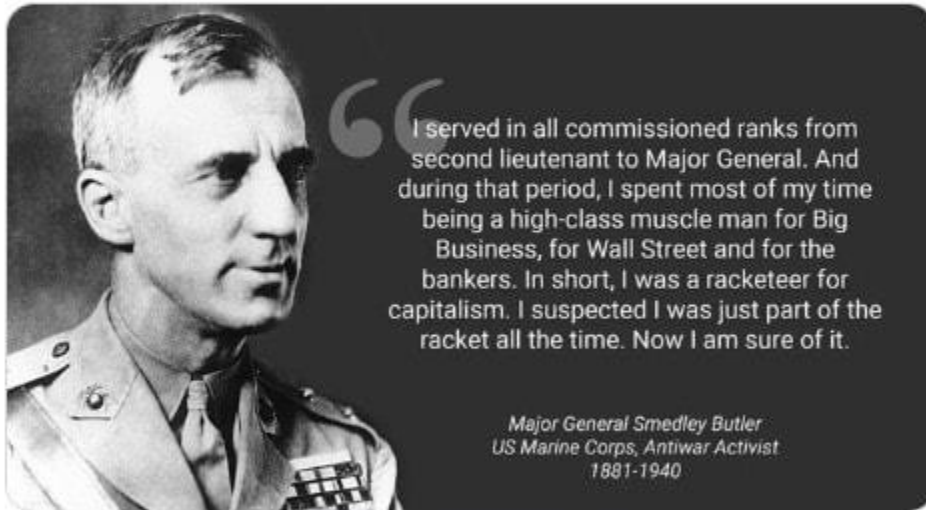


Charles Charles  @CHDC2983 · Dec 3



Replying to @ricwe123

The more things change the more they remain the same, the 241 wars/**conflicts** the US has fomented, funded and participated in since WWII reveal that peace is not an objective, rather it can't exist without **war**, and no amount of death or **human** suffering is an obstacle to waging it.



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Put differently, the run up to the 250th anniversary of the United States of America (USA) could be a useful opportunity to rediscover the roots of what can make America great, while not ignoring the past errors that in several (not all) respects have already been remedied (women and minorities have equal rights with men as principles from the Declaration and Constitution increasingly developed into the fabric of our society.