

## **History lesson: why democracy has always failed in the past**

By Patrick Buchanan, 13 July 2015

The Oklahoma Supreme Court, in a 7-2 decision, has ordered a monument of the Ten Commandments removed from the Capitol.

Calling the Commandments “religious in nature and an integral part of the Jewish and Christian faiths,” the court said the monument must go.

Gov. Mary Fallin has refused. And Oklahoma lawmakers instead have filed legislation to let voters cut out of their constitution the specific article the justices invoked. Some legislators want the justices impeached.

### **A harbinger of what is to come in America**

Fallin’s action seems a harbinger of what is to come in America — an era of civil disobedience like the 1960s, where court orders are defied and laws ignored in the name of conscience and a higher law.

Only this time, the rebellion is likely to arise from the right.

Certainly, Americans are no strangers to lawbreaking. What else was our revolution but a rebellion to overthrow the centuries-old rule and law of king and Parliament, and establish our own?

U.S. Supreme Court decisions have been defied, and those who defied them lionized by modernity. Thomas Jefferson freed all imprisoned under the sedition act, including those convicted in court trials presided over by Supreme Court justices. Jefferson then declared the law dead.

Some Americans want to replace Andrew Jackson on the \$20 bill with Harriet Tubman, who, defying the Dred Scott decision and fugitive slave acts, led slaves to freedom on the Underground Railroad.

New England abolitionists backed the anti-slavery fanatic John Brown, who conducted the raid on Harpers Ferry that got him hanged but helped to precipitate a Civil War. That war was fought over whether 11 Southern states had the same right to break free of Mr. Lincoln’s Union as the 13 colonies did to break free of George III’s England.

### **Millions of Americans defied the Volstead Act**

Millions of Americans, with untroubled consciences, defied the Volstead Act, imbibed alcohol and brought an end to Prohibition.

In the civil rights era, defying laws mandating segregation and ignoring court orders banning demonstrations became badges of honor.

Rosa Parks is a heroine because she refused to give up her seat on a Birmingham bus, despite the laws segregating public transit that relegated blacks to the “back of the bus.”

In “Letter from Birmingham Jail,” Dr. King, defending civil disobedience, cited Augustine — “an unjust law is no law at all” — and Aquinas who defined an unjust law as “a human law that is not rooted in eternal law and natural law.”

**“One has a moral responsibility to disobey unjust laws.”**

Said King, “one has a moral responsibility to disobey unjust laws.”

But who decides what is an “unjust law”?

If, for example, one believes that abortion is the killing of an unborn child and same-sex marriage is an abomination that violates “eternal law and natural law,” do those who believe this not have a moral right if not a “moral responsibility to disobey such laws”?

Rosa Parks is celebrated.

But the pizza lady who said her Christian beliefs would not permit her to cater a same-sex wedding was declared a bigot. And the LGBT crowd, crowing over its Supreme Court triumph, is writing legislation to make it a violation of federal civil rights law for that lady to refuse to cater that wedding.

But are people who celebrate the Stonewall riots in Greenwich Village as the Mount Sinai moment of their movement really standing on solid ground to demand that we all respect the Obergefell decision as holy writ?

**A crime not to rent to homosexuals**

And if cities, states or Congress enact laws that make it a crime not to rent to homosexuals, or to refuse services at celebrations of their unions, would not dissenting Christians stand on the same moral ground as Dr. King if they disobeyed those laws?

Already, some businesses have refused to comply with the Obamacare mandate to provide contraceptives and abortion-inducing drugs to their employees. Priests and pastors are going to refuse to perform same-sex marriages. Churches and chapels will refuse to host them. Christian colleges and universities will deny married-couple facilities to homosexuals.

Laws will be passed to outlaw such practices as discrimination, and those laws, which the Christians believe violate eternal law and natural law, will, as Dr. King instructed, be disobeyed.

And the removal of tax exemptions will then be on the table.

If a family disagreed as broadly as we Americans do on issues so fundamental as right and wrong, good and evil, the family would fall apart, the couple would divorce, and the children would go their separate ways.

Something like that is happening in the country.

*A secession of the heart has already taken place in America, and a secession, not of states, but of people from one another, caused by divisions on social, moral, cultural, and political views and values, is taking place.*

## **America is disuniting**

America is disuniting, Arthur Schlesinger Jr. wrote 25 years ago.

And for those who, when young, rejected the views, values and laws of Eisenhower's America, what makes them think that dissenting Americans in this post-Christian and anti-Christian era will accept their laws, beliefs, values?

Why should they?

---

In 1887 Alexander Tyler, a Scottish history professor at the University of Edinburgh had this to say about the fall of the Athenian Republic some 2,000 years prior:

*"A democracy is always temporary in nature; it simply cannot exist as a permanent form of government. A democracy will continue to exist up until the time that voters discover that they can vote themselves generous gifts from the public treasury. From that moment on, the majority always votes for the candidates who promise the most benefits from the public treasury, with the result that every democracy will finally collapse over loose fiscal policy, (which is) always followed by a dictatorship."*

"The average age of the world's greatest civilizations from the beginning of history, has been about 200 years. During those 200 years, these nations always progressed through the following sequence:

From bondage to spiritual faith;  
From spiritual faith to great courage;  
From courage to liberty;  
From liberty to abundance;  
From abundance to complacency;  
From complacency to apathy;  
From apathy to dependence;  
From dependence back into bondage."

### **An Obituary: Born 1776, Died 2016**

Number of States won by: Obama **19**, Romney **29**

Square miles of land won by: Obama **580,000**, Romney **2,427,000**

Population of counties won by: Obama, **127,000,000**, Romney, **143,000,000**

Murder rate per 100,000 residents in counties won by: Obama: **13.2**, Romney **2.1**

Professor Olson adds: "In aggregate, the map of the territory Romney won was mostly the land owned by the taxpaying citizens of the country. Obama territory mostly encompassed those citizens living in low income tenements and living off various forms of government welfare..."

**Olson believes the United States is now somewhere between the "complacency and**

**apathy" phase of Professor Tyler's definition of democracy, with some 40% of the nation's population already having reached the "governmental dependence" phase.**