

Who are the 'people' in 'we the people?'

Written by Fred Easter
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Nobody asked me, but even as this administration has ended one war and is winding down another, another war is raging here at home.

Right after President Obama was elected in 2008, plans began to be drawn up by Republican strategists designed to make it more and more difficult for Democrats to build upon their success.

First they carefully analyzed Obama's constituency. "Who voted for him, and how can we make it harder for them to do so again?"

They immediately began focusing on state elections. They spent large sums of money working to take control of as many state legislatures and governor's mansions as possible. That would allow them to take control of the redistricting process that followed the 2010 census. Then they could redraw congressional district lines so that as many districts as possible would become "safely Republican." Then, they could enact strict voter ID laws aimed at realities in Democratic strongholds that many eligible voters lacked photo identification. They worked at changing absentee and early voting rules so that college students and elderly African-American church goers would find voting more difficult.

If we watch Republicans over the next four years, we will see them attempting to alter, where they can, the rules for awarding Electoral College votes in those states that voted Democratic in the 2012 election. Do not expect to see this activity in states such as Texas, which they control, but are currently voting Republican. There is a risk for Republicans, in Texas, as its Hispanic population mushrooms. That population growth should continue as Obama's stated goals on immigration reform gather steam.

At the national level, they herded every Republican congressperson, and some Democrats, into line on preventing any business from being conducted by the president or Congress.

This is underhanded, shameful, reprehensible and undemocratic. But that's not the whole story.

Republicans are simultaneously trying to turn back the clock on 40 years of *Roe vs. Wade*. North Dakota, South Dakota and Mississippi each have been reduced to *one* abortion clinic each. Their efforts to restrict voting rights continue unabated. Now, Republicans are fighting to keep assault weapons and 30 round clips in the hands of private citizens.

Maybe it's me, but, I remember when the same folks didn't want citizens in the Black Panther Party or the Branch Davidians in the Waco compound to have one switchblade knife between them. This is not simply undemocratic; it's blood-curdling scary. The 2nd Amendment is about a group of colonies taking responsibility for their own safety, when the only threat to Colonial security was the British government. Those assault weapons are not sporting weapons. Anybody target shooting with a 30 round clip would cheat their 1-year-old at peek-a-boo. These are anti-personnel weapons and the folks stockpiling these weapons and ammo are not planning to attack the U.S. Marines. Nor, are they worried about the Marines attacking them. Today, pilotless aircraft are being controlled from somewhere in Virginia are successfully taking out installations halfway around the world. Installations are full of folk who are armed with

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assault weapons. Those targets contained a well-regulated militia. Osama Bin Laden had a well-regulated militia. So, it should be clear to everyone that assault weapons are an ineffective weapon against our government's armed forces.

I ask again, who are these assault weapons intended to protect and who is the imagined threat? What war are these folks preparing for? Please count to 30 before you answer.

Santayana said, "A people who forget their past, are doomed to relive it."

Have we forgotten that churches were bombed in this country? Bombed, likely, by God-fearing, churchgoing Christians, and our government could not, would not, did not find the perpetrators. Have we forgotten that drive-by shootings were originally invented by racist zealots in white sheets, whose numbers are ballooning since Obama was first elected? Are we unaware that Obama gets 10 death threats *every day*? Take care that we do not progress from "one man, one vote" to "one man left standing, all the votes." The rights of some people are under siege, and it may well be the rights of "We, the people."