

Regarding Civil Disobedience



By Anna Von Reitz

The Politics of Obedience- A Discourse of Voluntary Slavery, by Etienne de la Boetie, was written in 1553; it is the Great-Great-Grandfather of the Civil Disobedience Movement that gave rise to both the French Revolution and The American War of Independence, was later espoused by Thoreau and Emerson, and most famously, by Gandhi, who wrote his own treatise based on his own more recent experience leading the largest peaceful civil disobedience movement in world history.

When you truly understand it, civil disobedience is a direct result of active self-governance.

When you govern yourself, you become immune to being governed externally. You evaluate every demand being made upon you and quite consciously decide for yourself whether or not you will obey or should obey or what is gained or lost by obeying.

By gathering together with other people who have considered these questions over time, it is possible to arrive -- as our Forefathers did - at a consensus that reasonable men and women can agree on, and those accepted principles then become a new standard for the self-governance of a State and ultimately, of a country.

We, Americans, have been asleep at the wheel and have not done our part --- have not undertaken our self-governance for a very long time. Now, it falls to us individually and as State Assemblies to engage in this process of self-government anew, evaluating our inheritance, keeping what is good, restoring what was lost, and forging ahead with humility to consider the great questions of our own times.

The question naturally arises: having established self-governance, do we embrace civil disobedience, too?

The answer is and must be, yes, to the extent that conventional practices are demonstrably wrong and that other redress is unavailable. The Colonies did not rebel under the spur of an instant or arbitrary ill; they chose independence as the result of decades of failure by the British Monarch and the British Parliament to redress injustices. Thoreau spent time in jail for refusing to pay taxes on his own land. Gandhi led a whole nation to oppose the foreign oppression of the British Raj.

Many of us have made sacrifices on the way here, to uphold our rights and often enough, to defend the rights of others. We became civilly disobedient out of necessity, because our sense of justice and reason demanded it of us as self-governing people, and because there was no ready means of redress.

That does not mean that we became violent, even in the face of the most awful repressions and injustices. It means that we did not obey, and whatever prices were exacted for not obeying, we paid; be sure that civil disobedience has both its rewards and its penalties.

Long after the fines and the nights in jail are past, one can count the toll of civil disobedience in terms of friends and family members estranged because they feel that our civil disobedience

endangered or embarrassed them; too often, we face the continued harassment of police and politicians who demand obedience without reason. They are reduced to saying, "Because I say so!" or "Because fifty of us got together and we say so!"

In my experience, those who undertake peaceful civil disobedience are reasoning men, who have observed the principles of Nature and Justice, and who know what they are doing and why. They have taken up the mantle of self-governance, sought their remedies and been denied, and held their own court on the matter.

Today, we are embarked on the restoration, also known as "the reconstruction" of our Federal Government, and in order to do that, we must also declare and restore to ourselves to our native birthright political status as Americans, and then, we must assemble our States of the Union, because we and our States of the Union are the only Parties able to restore the "Missing Piece" of our Federal Government structure.

Our right to do this is not being contested by anyone, and so, we have our means of redress readily at hand, and our actions cannot be regarded as civil disobedience. Civil disobedience would be the Next Step, if our redress was not already provided for.

As it is, our redress, our ability and right to run and restore and manage our own government, has never been in question. The only thing lacking was our self-awareness of the problem and our will to address it as self-governing people.

Now that we fully understand the history we were never told and its implications, it is fairly easy for us to develop the ways and means to complete the reconstruction and to exercise our exemptions and to fully settle and declare the peace that we and our country are owed. The problems that we have, we can solve all by ourselves, and those of us involved in The American States Assembly are doing precisely that. We are taking care of business, stepping up, and self-governing.

This circumstance, that we always had redress available ever since 1865, is precisely what gave rise to the "presumption" that we agreed with all the things that our erstwhile Federal Subcontractors were doing "in our names". What else was the rest of the world supposed to think?

Our Forefathers already fought all the issues and decided the ways and means of redress for us. All we need to do is to grow up and learn to sail our own Ship of State according to those shining principles of dignity and freedom, and the supreme value of each one of us, and the right to self-govern, that they bequeathed to us.

There is, then, no reason for us practice (or be accused of practicing) civil disobedience.

Rather, there is a need for us to educate ourselves regarding our own empowerments and to learn how to exercise our powers in the honorable fashion intended.

This is, in fact, the greater part of civil obedience to the government we espouse, that we take up the burdens and responsibilities of self-governance --- first, the responsibility to govern our own lives in a peaceful and honest way; second, to govern our families and to teach our children their heritage; third, to govern our communities and Counties, so that they are not lost or pillaged; fourth, to govern our States of the Union and so guide them that they may flourish; and fifth, to govern our country so that its place among the nations may be known for peace and not for war.

By our completely lawful, legal, and peaceful return to the land and soil jurisdiction of our country, and our re-population of our States of the Union, we have devoted ourselves to these responsibilities and principles. We have exercised our option to self-govern, to assemble our States, to bring our State Governments into Session, to organize our courts, and to enforce our Public Law. By doing so, we have also earned the rights that accrue to those who accept the burdens of self-governance.

In a very few days we will join the modern world and issue State Credentials. These will be attached to a modern public database that can be used by our Federal and State of State Employees to instantly determine our political status and affirm the fact that we are owed all constitutional

guarantees. This, all by itself, will do a great deal toward correcting any misunderstanding about who we are and what law we stand upon and will put an end to most, if not all of the commercial fraud, that has been perniciously practiced against us. The advent of our courts will also remove us from the foreign martial and commercial courts that have been used to pillage and oppress us.

This second result of self-governance, our removal from subjection to foreign courts is also already guaranteed to us and affirmed by Ex Parte Milligan, 71 US 2. As our civilian government is assembled and our civilian court system is organized, we gain our redress against the abuses of the foreign maritime and martial courts by our own hands.

Indeed, friends, our destiny and our law was always in our own hands, and what we members of the States Assemblies are doing, is not civil disobedience; rather, by obeying our own principles and enlivening our own government, we are finally obeying our government by accepting the yoke of self-governance and in determining our future for ourselves.

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