

Viewing Twenty-First Century America from Ground Zero

By Donald W. Miller, Jr.

From the top of the World Trade Center one had a 90-mile-wide view of New York City and its environs. The two 110 story towers soared above the city's skyline. Like the poles of a giant magnet they emitted a kind of force that would draw the gaze of anyone within sight of them. Tourists taking the twenty minute ferry ride from lower Manhattan to the Statue of Liberty would find themselves, as the ferry approached Liberty Island, spending more time looking back at the twin towers than at Lady Liberty.

Construction of the towers began in 1966, the year the bull market that began in 1942 following the Great Depression ended. Terrorists demolished them in 2001, one year after the bull market that went from 1974 to 2000 ended.

The Port Authority of New York and New Jersey wanted to build a center for international trade in lower Manhattan, and in 1962 it commissioned the Japanese-American architect Minuro Yamasaki to design the project. As Yamasaki put it, "The Center's intent is to provide communication, information, proximity, and face-to-face convenience for exporters, importers, freight forwarders, customs brokers, international banks, and the many other enterprises involved in world trade."

They selected a 16-acre site two blocks from Wall Street, named for the wall the Dutch built there across the northern extent of their settlement to keep the British out. The site is adjacent to St. Paul Chapel. Built in 1766, it is the oldest public building in the city. When the thirteen States discarded their Articles of Confederation and ratified the Constitution in 1788 the Founders selected New York to be the nation's capitol. George Washington attended Thanksgiving services at St. Paul Chapel after his inauguration as America's first president.

The land filled site where the World Trade Center towers stood was once the harbor of New Amsterdam. More than 300 years ago, Dutch traders loaded fur pelts bought from Native Americans onto ships bound for markets in Holland.

The Port Authority specified that the complex must have a minimum of 10 million square feet of office space (the Empire State Building has 2.1 million sq. ft.). Yamasaki did it with a mix of low and high structures surrounding a large open space. The five-acre plaza, comprising about one-third



of the site, was, for him, the essential element in the design, not the grandeur of the two towers. He designed this space to provide “a great relief from the narrow streets and sidewalks of the surrounding Wall Street area.” More importantly, Yamasaki writes, in his autobiography *A Life in Architecture*, “Like many other important plazas in the world, it is designed as an end in itself, to set off the buildings facing it and to create an environment made totally for the pedestrian... an oasis.”

Facing seemingly insurmountable technical challenges, Yamasaki and his team of engineers and architects nevertheless figured out a way to construct the world’s tallest buildings on that site. They had to anchor the towers in granite that was 70 feet below the adjacent Hudson River. To do this they made a “slurry wall,” something that engineers had used for a subway system in Milan. Like the hull of a ship, this steel and concrete-reinforced wall kept river water from flooding the 500 by 1000-foot wide area of excavation. Two other innovations—load-bearing exterior walls and a “skylobby” system—substantially increased the amount of useable space on each floor. This enabled Yamasaki to have room for his plaza and still meet the square footage requirement for the center. Like he did with his 20-story IBM building in Seattle, Yamasaki provided structural integrity to the towers by placing steel columns around the *outside* of the building—236 of them spaced 22 inches apart. These vertical columns, 1353 feet high, along with the 47 in the central core, provided sufficient support for each floor to eliminate the need for any interior columns. Each tower had 254 elevators. Skylobbys, where people transferred from express to local elevators (on floors 44 and 78), divided the tower into three sections. He stacked the shafts for local elevators that serviced the lower, middle, and upper thirds of each tower one on top of the other. Yamasaki and his team thereby made 75 percent of each floor available for rent, compared with 50 percent per floor in other skyscrapers—and they built those towers for the same cost as a conventional skyscraper half as tall.

I first went to Ground Zero in January 2002 with former Mayor Giuliani and the US Conference of Mayors (I was there as a director of a start-up emergency response company that was one of the business sponsors of the conference). Mayor Giuliani pointed out that St. Paul Chapel, standing less than 100 yards from all that devastation, had escaped, amazingly, undamaged. At a luncheon held at a hotel near the site, John Whitehead, Chairman of the Lower Manhattan Development Corporation, told us that people were willing to wait for hours in line, regardless of the weather, to get to the public viewing area next to the Chapel’s graveyard for a good view. He predicted that Ground Zero would become one of the most highly visited places on the planet. Indeed, looking out across that 12-city-block-wide hole in the ground, created by removing 100,000 truckloads of debris that once was the World Trade Center, gives one a sober cultural, economic, and political view of 21st century America.

Herbert Levine, in the late 1940s, invented a new way to insulate steel and render it relatively fireproof. He sprayed wet asbestos on it. This replaced concrete (the Empire State building’s steel skeleton is encased in concrete), which is more cumbersome. Yamasaki’s design stipulated that the World Trade Center towers’ steel framework be insulated with asbestos. Sprayers began with the north tower. When they were on the 64th floor, however, city officials, concerned about a report that asbestos can cause cancer, made the builders stop using asbestos and switch to a different material. Nothing equals asbestos as a fire-retardant material. As a result of this edict, the builders had to use a less effective insulator for the steel columns supporting the upper floors of the north tower—and for all of the steel columns in the south tower. At the time (in 1970) Herbert Levine, pointing to the (north) tower where workers were now spraying a substitute, non-asbestos fire-retardant onto its upper steel columns, predicted: “If a fire breaks out above the 64th floor, that building will fall down.” (One will not find this prophetic statement cited in any of the thoroughly researched articles that the staff of the *New York Times* has written about the destruction of the World Trade Center.)

At a hearing held by the National Institute of Standards and Technology recently a panel of architects and engineers presented their findings on why the towers collapsed. The panel said that the fires caused the towers to collapse, not the structural damage done to them by the impact of the planes. They noted that insulation of the load-bearing steel columns in each tower at the sites of impact was done with a non-asbestos fire-retardant; and they concluded, “The insulation is going to turn out to be the root cause” of the towers’ (premature) collapse.

The plane that hit the North Tower destroyed about 35 of the 59 steel columns on the north face at floors 94-98. The steel there had been sprayed, the panel found, with a 1½-inch-thick flame-retardant. The North tower collapsed an hour and 44 minutes after the fire started. The plane that hit the South Tower took out 30 of the 59 columns on the south face at floors 78-84. The steel there had ¾-inch-thick non-asbestos fireproofing. This tower, although it sustained less structural damage than its twin and one stairwell to the upper floors remained intact, collapsed in 56 minutes. If the builders had been allowed to use asbestos, the towers’ collapse, although inevitable, would have been slowed. Rescuers and firefighters would have had more time to evacuate people and fight the fires. Steel loses half its strength at 1,100 degrees F and buckles at 2000 degrees F. Sprayed-asbestos insulation keeps steel that is exposed to a raging fire, including one fueled by the impact of a fully loaded airplane, from reaching this critical temperature for four hours. The designers of the twin towers reckoned that this length of time would enable people trapped in the building above a fire to be evacuated from the roof by helicopter and give firefighters time to fight it with helicopters.

In the North tower, all 1,344 people that were trapped on the floors above the fire and 84 still on the lower floors when it collapsed died. In the South tower, 602 people above the fire (who given enough time could have escaped down the intact stairwell, as 16 people did before it collapsed) and 18 still on the lower floors when this tower collapsed died. Another 363 civilians, 343 firefighters, and 78 rescuers died—2823 people in all. (These figures are from the *New York Times*.) Had government regulators not stepped in and banned asbestos fire-proofing of the upper steel columns, the North tower could have remained standing for another 2 hours and 15 minutes, and the South tower, for another 3 hours. Many of these people, most likely, would have survived.

The demonization of asbestos tells us a lot about the current state of American culture. Arthur Robinson, in the title of an article in his newsletter *Access to Energy* that he wrote shortly after 9-11, sized it up this way (before the actual number of deaths were known): “Terrorists 1000 and Enviros 5000.” Terrorists destroyed the 7-building World Trade Center complex and killed people at the airplanes’ point of impact; but environmentalists, by convincing government officials in New York to ban asbestos, killed thousands more.

Asbestos can cause cancer (lung cancer and mesothelioma). There is *no evidence*, however, that insulating buildings with asbestos causes cancer or is in anyway harmful to human health. Shipyard workers in the 1940s and 50s got cancer when they worked with a special kind of asbestos—amphibole crocidolite (blue) asbestos mined in Africa—to insulate ships. Its fibers are sharp and needle-like. These workers were exposed to high concentrations of this material, concentrations 100,000 to 1,000,000 times higher than those found in a building that has been insulated with asbestos. The asbestos used in 95 percent of commercial applications—for sound-proofing, in brake lining and fire-fighting hoses, to insulate steel, etc.—is chrysotile (white) asbestos. White asbestos has larger, serpentine fibers that are more easily expelled from the lungs. It is less dangerous than blue asbestos. The risk of having chrysotile asbestos in buildings and trucks is virtually non-existent. A recent study published in the *New England Journal of Medicine* of women living next to a

chrysotile asbestos mine in Quebec showed that long-term exposure to relatively high levels of this type of asbestos did not increase their risk of getting cancer.

Environmental activists lumped the two kinds of asbestos together and argued that all “asbestos” is bad. The federal government’s Environmental Protection Agency joined the cause and in 1989 issued a rule banning all commercial uses of asbestos. Basing their assessment of risk on a “linear no-threshold” model, the EPA warned that thousands of Americans exposed to even very low levels of asbestos in the air would die of cancer. This model posits that the harmful effect of something—a carcinogen or radiation—is directly related to the degree of exposure. Its harmful effect is linearly extrapolated down to zero. This means that only a *zero* dose—the absence of that thing—will ensure that one will have no bad effects from it. This means that if a shipyard worker gets cancer after being exposed to a concentration of asbestos that is 10,000 times greater than that found in an asbestos-insulated building, then for every 10,000 people working or going to school in a building with asbestos one of them will get cancer. For two hundred million Americans so exposed, this means 20,000 deaths will result from exposure to even a very low dose of asbestos. But it has not happened. Exposure to low-level concentrations of chrysotile asbestos does not result in an increased incidence of cancer. The model is wrong. Nevertheless, a frightened American public did not protest the EPA’s ban on asbestos, or its abatement orders. As a result, hundreds of billions of dollars have been wasted removing asbestos from buildings and schools to eradicate what is a nonexistent health problem. Several hundred corporations have gone bankrupt paying out huge claims for injuries alleged to have resulted from exposure to low-level concentrations asbestos. The American economy has suffered. But an army of environmentalists, politicians, lawyers, businesses that remove asbestos from buildings, and doctors who testify as expert witnesses for plaintiffs has profited handsomely from asbestos litigation and abatement.

Banning asbestos has caused an estimated 400 deaths a year due to unsafe non-asbestos brake linings (one percent of the yearly 40,000 deaths from vehicle accidents) and the deaths of perhaps 2500 people when the twin towers collapsed prematurely. Far worse than the ban on asbestos, however, which has caused thousands of unnecessary deaths, the EPA’s ban on the use of DDT has killed millions.

The EPA banned DDT in 1972. The evidence that prompted EPA regulators to ban DDT—that it weakened the eggs of endangered birds and that it is a carcinogen—is weak, and upon careful scrutiny, nonexistent. This US government edict to date has caused the deaths of 60,000,000 children from DDT-preventable malaria, 2 million children a year (estimates of the number of deaths range from 1 to 3 million a year). The mosquito that is the vector for this disease was on the verge of being eradicated when the EPA banned DDT. As we view Federalist America in the 21st century, especially in light of its 18th century origins, Americans must face the fact that an unconstitutional arm of its central government has engaged in actions that have killed as many people, all of them children, as Hitler and Stalin together murdered in the last century.

When confronted with these facts, hard-core environmentalists say it can’t be helped. There are too many humans on the planet. Humans are stripping the earth of its resources. Technology, commercialism, and world trade make matters worse.

Critics for the *New York Times* and the *New Yorker* did not like the World Trade Center. Paul Goldberger, architecture critic of the *New York Times*, wrote: “[The towers are] boring, so utterly banal as to be unworthy of the headquarters of a bank in Omaha. Two big, tall boxes, with... absolutely no relationship to anything around the site—to either the river or the surrounding streets...

The buildings remain an occasion to mourn: they never should have happened, they were never really needed, and if they say anything at all about our city, it is that we retreat into banality when the opportunity comes for greatness.” Lewis Mumford in the *New Yorker* described them as, “Purposeless gigantism and technological exhibitionism.” After terrorists destroyed the towers, Jeffrey St. Clair, in *CounterPunch*, wrote: “Under other circumstances, thousands would have gathered to cheer the planned demolition of these oppressive structures as lustily as they have the implosions of the Kingdome in Seattle and other misbegotten monstrosities of the 1970s.” The intellectual elite of American culture, like environmentalists, has an anti-business, anti-technology, anti-science mindset. “Banality” and “exhibitionism” are the terms that best describe, for them, the technological innovations of the World Trade Center.

A hip-hop group called The Coup put the anti-business tone of American culture in bold relief on the



cover of its album titled “Party Music.” It shows one of the rappers, Boots, with his finger on a detonator blowing up the twin towers, America’s icon of business and commerce. The towers behind him are on fire with smoke billowing out from each one. The album has songs titled “Kill My Landlord” and “5 Million Ways to Kill a CEO” and lyrics like this: “Toss a dollar in the river and when he [the CEO] jumps in/If you find he can swim, put lead boots on him and do it again.” One reviewer gave the album an overall 9 out of 10 with the lyrics getting the highest rating, a 9.5/10. The album was scheduled for release in late September 2001. (After 9-11 they changed the cover, before the album’s release, to one that shows a party going on in a bar.)

Three tenets of today’s tax-financed education system in America come to mind when one stands at Ground Zero. Those musicians in The Coup (from Oakland) did not acquire their anti-business bias in a vacuum. The media and public schools implanted these ideas in them. (It’s no different in private schools.) Students today are taught that businessmen are greedy and cannot be trusted. Profits are bad. Educators view unregulated markets and inequality of wealth, both essential ingredients for a healthy economy, as defects of capitalism. A market economy, they teach, produces disastrous consequences for the public welfare. A centrally planned, government-regulated economy is better. That is how President Roosevelt got the country out of the Great Depression, which capitalism caused.

Also, students today learn little about the first 300 years of American civilization. Teachers gloss over America’s Colonial Period from 1607 to 1775 (from the settlement of Jamestown to the Battle of Lexington-Concord). They do point out, however, that the colonists committed genocide by infecting the Native Americans with diseases like smallpox. Educators likewise pay little attention to The American Revolution, which began in 1775 and reached its turning point in the Battle of Saratoga in 1777. For them, the Founders who wrote and signed the Declaration of Independence were “Dead white guys who owned slaves.” Educators gloss over the Confederation, from 1777 to 1788—that important stage of American history that began with the signing of The Articles of Confederation and ended with the ratification of the Constitution. The Articles of Confederation? How many American high school and college students know what they are? Educators also quickly pass over the first 150 years of the current Federalist Era that began in 1788, except to venerate Abraham Lincoln for freeing the slaves and saving the Union. From a Marxist perspective, American history before the presidency of Franklin Roosevelt is not important.

The ethics upon which the American republic was founded are natural rights to liberty and property. British Common Law supports these rights, which Richard Maybury distills into two principles: “Do all you have agreed to do,” and “Do not encroach on other persons or their property.” In stark contrast, as America enters the 21st century and with the Federalist Era now 214 years old, the ethics of cultural Marxism have gained ascendancy. Cultural Marxists say that Thomas Jefferson is wrong. Rights do not exist “in nature.” They are “socially defined,” as the Tavistock Group puts it (in their manifesto on ethics in health care). Government decides who should be the “rights holders,” and given special legal privileges and entitlements, and who must be the corresponding “obligation bearers”—a 21st century American variant of the classical Marxist dictum, “From each according to his ability, to each according to his need.” For cultural Marxists the ideal state is one where everyone, except its rulers, is equal, in their economic standing and in all other respects as well—an egalitarian government-run utopia. This ethic espouses “social justice” and “social responsibility.” What politicians, educators, and environmentalists really mean by these catchphrases is that it is *they* who are charged with defining “responsibility” and “justice,” not a set of obsolete moral rules, natural rights, or common law. Whenever they use the word “social” as a predicate, read “government.” Government authorities enforce “responsibility” and “justice” by taking money from well-off businesses and citizens and redistributing it to people they deem deserve support—i.e., to those who “need” it. This statist view of ethics now pervades all levels of education, including MBA programs in business schools.

A third tenet of today’s government-controlled education system stems from this Marxist ethic. It is: the collective trumps the individual. From an egalitarian, everybody-is-equal perspective, individualism—individual identity, initiative, achievement, and accountability—is out. Group identity, group participation, group rights and entitlements are in. One’s associations and group define a person, not one’s individual accomplishments. In postmodern, Marxist America “independent, self-reliant people” is an anachronism.

Traditional American values of hard work and individual initiative fueled Yamasaki’s life and architecture. Minuro Yamasaki (1912-1986) was a Nisei, a second generation Japanese-American. He was born in Seattle and grew up there and graduated from the University of Washington in 1934. When World War II began he was living in New York and worked for an architectural firm. He brought his parents to New York to live with him in order to keep them from being put in a “relocation camp,” the Roosevelt administration’s version of concentration camps for American citizens of Japanese descent who lived on the West Coast. When most architects were embracing the International Style of flat, glassy structures, Yamasaki designed buildings that were more decorative and ornamental and drew upon historical traditions. He wrote, “I believe contemporary architects should not ignore the arch, whether Roman, Gothic, or Islamic, simply because they were used in traditional buildings.” Yamasaki’s work reflected George Washington’s advice to his countrymen to have commercial relations with all peoples and nations but to “steer clear of permanent alliances with any portion of the foreign world” (in his Farewell Address). Yamasaki built three airports in Saudi Arabia and that country’s Monetary Agency Headquarters in Riyadh. The Royal Family so admired his design of the Dhahran Air Terminal (completed in 1961) that they displayed it on one of their banknotes. He built a stunning and inspiring synagogue, the Temple Beth-El, in Bloomfield Township, Michigan (1974); an equally arresting Founder’s Hall in Shinji



Shumeikai, Japan (1982); the Science Pavilion at the 1962 Seattle World's Fair; and the Woodrow Wilson School of Public and International Affairs at Princeton University (1965), among many other architectural works around the world.

When Yamasaki designed the World Trade Center and construction began in 1966, 36 years ago, America was an economic powerhouse. The US had a merchandise balance-of-trade surplus (exports exceeding imports) of \$3.8 Billion (\$21.2 Billion in 2002 dollars). In 2001, instead of a surplus America had a trade deficit of \$427 Billion, importing that much more manufactured goods than it exported. Today Intel, IBM, GE, and Microsoft, and many other US corporations are manufacturing more and more of their high-tech products outside of the US in other countries, notably China. Wal-Mart has become this country's largest corporation. America is now like a third world country in that it only maintains a trade surplus in such things as natural resources (coal), agricultural products (soybeans, wheat, rice, corn, and animal feed), and low-tech goods such as cigarettes and scrap metal. (It has small but diminishing surplus in airplanes and specialized machinery and parts.) From the vantage point of Ground Zero, it is ironic that America, like it was in the 1600s, is once again a net exporter of fur hides.

In 1966 the US dollar was fixed in value against gold at the rate of \$35.00 per ounce. Only people in other countries, however, could exchange their dollars for gold. That ended in 1971. Since then, freed from the constraints of the Gold Standard, the US dollar has lost more than 80 percent of its value. Goods and services that \$1.00 could purchase when the twin towers were under construction now cost \$5.57. In 1966 America was a net creditor to the world. Now the US is the world's largest debtor nation, with a net external debt of \$4.1 Trillion. In 1966 the US National Treasury debt was \$329 Billion. In 2001 this debt had risen to \$6.1 Trillion, nearly half of it held by foreigners, which U.S. taxpayers must service and eventually repay. The federal government also owes an estimated \$13 Trillion in its obligation to pay social security and \$17 Trillion for Medicare. Add these tax-financed unfunded liabilities to the Treasury debt and the US National debt balloons to \$36 Trillion. In a population of 288 million that is a liability of \$125,000 for each citizen. The cost of these entitlements far exceed an amount that politicians can tax its citizens to pay for them, which spells the demise of Social Security and Medicare in 21st century America.

Although it has become an unrivaled military superpower, Federalist America is in decline. Like that hole in lower Manhattan that was once the World Trade Center, the unpayable \$36 Trillion financial black hole that the federal government has dug with promises of entitlements to its voters may prove to be its downfall.

In contrast to the Founders' intentions, Federalist America has a bloated central government that regulates all aspects of its citizens' lives. The federal government employs one million people that are housed in the equivalent of 321 Empire State buildings—in 674 Million square feet of office space. This does not include the US military, which occupies an additional 3.3 Billion square feet. The number of people that the federal government employs has increased 4,000-fold since 1800, while the US population has increased only 71-fold. Federal expenditures are 18.7 percent of the GDP, up from 2.9 percent in 1900. Direct government payments to individuals—for Social Security, Medicare, Medicaid, and government pensions—



comprise nearly half of all federal spending. Government spending on social programs has grown 14 times faster than the economy. The Constitution does not address 90 percent of what the federal government now does.

The federal government regulates the economy and the lives of its citizens with an alphabet soup of extra-constitutional agencies. Regulators have adopted a standard of acceptable risk where the chance of getting cancer from environmental pollutants, ionizing radiation, and other potential carcinogens should be one-in-a-million (10^{-6}), or at most one-in-a-hundred-thousand. And they use the linear no-threshold model to assess risk. Government managers apply this inappropriately assessed, overly stringent level of risk to things like ionizing radiation, which reap considerable economic benefits (more nuclear power plants would make America less dependent on Middle Eastern oil), to protect a population that *already* has a *one-in-three* chance of developing cancer of all types during one's lifetime and a *one-in-four* chance of dying from cancer. Even worse, some federal regulations, like banning asbestos and DDT, wind up killing far more people than they purportedly save. Compliance with federal regulations cost \$834 Billion a year (8 percent of GDP), which has stifled the economy and bankrupted many productive businesses.

The federal government owns 40 percent of all the land in America and controls, through regulations and land use directives, the other 60 percent.

In Federalist America, government has taken control of education. During America's Colonial Period and short-lived Confederation, families, churches, and local communities (except for some city-run New England schools) educated American citizens. Schools were not financed by taxes or controlled by the state. In the Federalist Era, however, after the Civil War, government managers gradually decided that they needed to take control of education in order to produce responsible citizens. Following Horace Mann's advice, government adopted the Prussian model of education and then, in the 20th century, John Dewey's Progressive method of socializing children. The result: a correct thinking, dumbed-down public living contentedly in a semi-socialist society.

As a world empire, Federalist America has bred enemies that hate us with such passion that they are willing to sacrifice their own lives in order to kill Americans and destroy their property. And if their attacks compel the US government to further restrict the liberty of its citizens in an effort to give them more security, so much the better. The terrorists' resolve is too strong for it to be simply a matter of envy and hatred of Western freedom and prosperity, although correct thinking would dictate that this is their sole motivation. The US military has killed more innocent people in Afghanistan in their post 9-11 bombing raids than terrorists killed in America on 9-11. Since the US imposed a trade embargo on Iraq eleven years ago, 500,000 children have died from malnutrition and lack of access to clean water (chlorine, along with other water purification chemicals, is one of the items banned by the sanctions).

As America enters the 21st century, we can see clearly that the Founders' attempt to establish a constitutional republic under the rule of law, with a limited central government that protects the lives, liberty, and property of its citizens and derives "its just powers from the consent of the governed," has failed.

The first major setback in maintaining a constitutional republic was Abraham Lincoln's Civil War, which disallowed by force of arms a state's right of secession and set the precedent for a strong central government that could infringe on personal liberties (see "A Jeffersonian View of the Civil

War,” archived on www.donaldmiller.com). The second major setback was Woodrow Wilson’s decision to send American troops to Europe and turn what was a stalemated European War into World War I. This action put Federalist America on the path of empire (with the Spanish-American War of 1898 serving as a prelude). Today Federalist America is a world empire on the Roman model. It polices the world and uses its unrivaled military power to ensure that its needed supply of oil from the Middle East arrives on schedule. Can America once again become a republic? See “A Fourteen Point Plan for a Post-Wilsonian America” (archived on www.donaldmiller.com).

The federal government in 21st century America no longer protects the lives, liberty, and property of its citizens. The post 9-11 USA PATRIOT ACT (Public Law 107-56), voted on in Congress before most legislators had a chance to read it, effectively rescinds the Bill of Rights. The government can now eavesdrop on our phone calls, faxes, and emails at will (Section 207 [III]). Section 358 of the Act requires US and foreign banks, stockbrokers, and credit-card companies, without your knowledge, to provide information about you to intelligence agencies on demand. And among other things, this new law permits police to break into your home or business without a search warrant if they suspect that you are using a computer to commit a criminal act (Section 213). They can now do this legally and surreptitiously and seize files and property and, if they wish, plant a bug on your computer.

This is a far cry from the constitutional republic that States’ legislators envisioned when they ratified the Constitution in 1788. Had they known it would come to this they would have undoubtedly heeded Patrick Henry’s admonition not to do it and kept their States free and independent with their already established Articles of Confederation.

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