

The Passy Press

Letter to the Editor

From: Peter Moore peter.moore@undisclosed.com

To: Nick Gardiner enpg@thepassypress.com

Date: May 2, 2015

Subject: Re: New Essay Expose on Our Federal Government & What to Do About It

Dear Sir,

Pell's take on the on the governance crisis in Washington is very interesting.

It has been my view for a number of years that Congress is a much bigger threat to national security than ISIS or Al-Qaeda. Congress is supposed to keep the government functioning, and to solve problems. To paraphrase the climate deniers, I am no political scientist. However, I believe activities of this sort are referred to as "governing". The failure of Congress to govern is sapping the strength of the Nation.

The structure dictated for Congress by the constitution is big part of the problem. Because of gerrymandering, the House does not perform the function envisioned for it, which was to accurately reflect political sentiment in the country. This has been a weakness since the early days of the republic, but it has evolved into a life-threatening flaw. The Senate, which was a kluge devised by the founders to mollify small states like Delaware and Rhode Island so that the constitution could get ratified, is a much bigger affront to democracy today than it was in 1790. A voter in Wyoming has an influence in the Senate that is about 100 times greater than that of a voter in California.

Pell's point about the dysfunction in DC, namely that it is being actively promoted by a large group of well-financed people, many of whom would lose their jobs if the government started working better, had never crossed my mind. I guess I am too naive. His hypothesis has explanatory power, however, which is something you have to like in a hypothesis. I wish I shared his optimism about getting this turned around. As Barney Frank once famously said, "The voters are no prize." A real fix would amount to a political upheaval of almost revolutionary proportions, and an event of this magnitude is unlikely to occur until the level of pain in the country reaches a very high level indeed.

Best wishes,

Peter

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