

***CAVEAT EMPTOR...BUYERS BEWARE!* Fr. Joe Shea**

As a lover of history—World, Church, and Political—I have been greatly alarmed by what I have been hearing from some of our political leaders, namely that they want to radically change the structure of the government that we have known for 233 years. As your pastor, I need to state emphatically: *Caveat Emptor... Buyers Beware*. Beware of what you are being sold.

In 1787, the authors of the U.S. Constitution arranged the U.S. Government to be a Constitutional Republic, with three co-equal Branches—each with its own unique powers and responsibilities. The Legislative Branch makes the laws. The Executive Branch signs the laws and enforces the laws. And the Judicial Branch—the Supreme Court—judges whether those laws are constitutional or not.

These three co-equal branches serve as a check and balance to one another. The authors of the Constitution deliberately arranged the government system to be a slow and even obstructive process so that no one branch of government or member of the government or party could dominate and rush through only their agenda.

Now some of our political leaders have stated publically that they want to radically restructure our system of government in Three Ways.

First, some political leaders are proposing to pack the Supreme Court with six or more Supreme Court Judges who are consonant with their political views. The Constitution doesn't stipulate how many justices should serve on the Court. The number fluctuated until 1869. Since 1869, there have been nine justices on the Supreme Court. When there is a vacancy on the Supreme Court, either through death or the retirement of a Judge or Justice, the sitting President has the responsibility to nominate a judge and the Senate has the responsibility to approve or confirm that nomination. An appointment to the Supreme Court is a lifetime appointment.

In any level of the court system, a judge is to be impartial, an umpire of sorts who calls balls and strikes. There has been a growing tendency for many judges being activist judges—taking over the role of the Legislature by determining policy.

Having said this, just stop and think of the consequences of “*packing*” the court with judges of your preference when your particular political party is in charge, as some politicians are proposing. Every time a particular party is in the majority, that party will add more judges to counter act what the previous party has done. It would lead to an exponential growth in the number of judges on the court.

It would destroy the Supreme Court and, with it, America as we know it.

Second, some political leaders are proposing to eliminate the Filibuster Rule. The Filibuster Rule was created to prevent the majority party in the government from rushing through or railroading their agenda. The Filibuster Rule gives representation and a voice to the minority party and the ability to stall legislation. Otherwise, the majority party would dominate every policy in the United States.

Third, some political leaders want to eliminate the Electoral College so that the winner of the popular vote wins the election. On first hearing, you might say, “*Hey, the winner of the popular vote should be the next President.*” But remember we are a Constitutional Republic, not a Democracy. In a Democracy, the winner of the popular vote wins the election, but not so in a Constitutional Democracy. The Electoral College determines the winner of a Presidential election.

The Electoral College is a key element of our governmental system and the election process. The Electoral College is made up of the Electorates of each State in the Union. Each State in the Union has a certain number of electoral votes based on the population of the State. For example, the State of California has 55 electoral votes while the State of Maine—a

much smaller and less populated State—only has 4 electoral votes. The Electoral College was established to give representation and a voice to the smaller, less populated States in the union. The Electorates—representing the people of their State—elect the President. A candidate needs at least 270 Electoral votes to win the Presidency. As with the elimination of the Filibuster Rule, to get rid of the Electoral College would result in the larger, more populous states dominating and deciding every policy for every voter in the United States.

You need to understand how consequential and dangerous these proposals are. The United States that we have known and loved and that has done so much for this nation and the world will cease to exist. We will never come back from these radical changes. Just look at history and what happened with the French Revolution and the Communist Revolution. This is one of the great issues on the ballot in this coming election. That's why I am exhorting you not to vote for any politician who proposes to radically change—and ultimately destroy—the system of government that we have known, cherished, and prospered under, and that has worked so well for the past 233 years.