

Recently I read an online article. One sentence grabbed me and continues to haunt me.

“A virtuous politician will lead people in the proper direction, towards PERSONAL SELF-CONTROL, FRUGALITY, AND EXCELLENCE.”

James Madison said, “Charity is no part of the legislative duty of the government.”

As a Vietnam-era United States Air Force veteran, a financially secure and retired small business owner, and a concerned patriot, I, at the age of seventy-six decided to “do something” about the demise of our “Sweet Land of Liberty.”

I had never considered running for a political office, but my wife of fifty-six years, Linda and I were convinced that our creator, God, was telling us to enter the political arena.

Having recently been reelected to serve a second term, I want to tell people about my experience and impressions looking back.

You need to understand that I had no previous connection with or experience in politics. I was not an official member of any political organization. I had no relationship with any politician. I had never even met my Statehouse Representative against whom I was running.

When I showed up that morning in March 2022 to register to run, it was noticeable that the other candidates and the election officials were trying not to be obvious in their shock that such an elderly man would be wasting his \$208 and consider running for the South Carolina Statehouse.

Fast forward to June 14, 2022. In a three-person race, Joe White placed first with 46% of the vote.

Suddenly, to the political class, my candidacy was serious, and within days, the Republican establishment sent a minion to Newberry to “chat” with me. His job? To befriend me in such a way that I would join the “go along to get along” mob in Columbia.

Between the Republican Primary runoff on June 28th and the General Election on November 8, 2022, that state legislator invited me to the Statehouse, introduced me to all the “leadership,” and let me sit beside him during a special session as the legislature debated the “heartbeat” bill. He “courted” me as if I were the most important new legislator in South Carolina.

All that changed on December 6, 2022. When the Republican Caucus met that day, I questioned rule 16b. “No member of the caucus shall engage in campaign activities of any kind against any other (incumbent) Caucus member in good standing.” I was a USAF

veteran who had sworn to uphold the Constitution and had fought for my 1st amendment right to "Free Speech."

When I said, "I will not give up my right to Free Speech, suddenly, I was no longer "courted." It was as if I had blasphemed the Holy Spirit. Suddenly, I was a person with leprosy, unclean, unwanted, and despised.

It has taken me two years to fully comprehend how those power-thirsty politicians in Columbia operate, and let me say unequivocally, it is NOT virtuous.

It is nasty. It is deceitful, it is arrogant.

National news media keep us focused on the political issues, problems, and corruption in Washington, D.C. We have watched as Democrats and Republicans have tried for nine years to destroy Donald J. Trump. That's right, the D.C. Uniparty has fought and will continue to fight to maintain its power to run our lives from the nation's Capital.

Some have said aloud what they think about you, what they think about me. They've called us "smelly Walmart shoppers, deplorable, fascists, and ignorant."

I BEG you! Get your eyes and ears off Washington and look at the same disdain your Columbia legislators have for you.

What South Carolina needs is a Donald Trump figure who is willing to stand tall, tell the truth, and "go to the mat" for our rights in South Carolina.

We need a person (man or woman) who will prioritize the core functions of state government (Public Safety, Education K-12, and Infrastructure). We the people deserve roads that are safe and do not destroy our vehicles as we drive on them. We deserve K-12 public schools that educate and do not indoctrinate.

We need elected officials who will "lead people in the proper direction toward PERSONAL SELF-CONTROL, FRUGALITY, AND EXCELLENCE."

We need to end the "vote buying" earmark practice that wastes hundreds of millions of your hard-earned dollars each year.

We need to enforce "zero-based" budgeting.

We need to stop allowing the commerce department, a few wealthy individuals, and large corporations to control the "powerful" legislators with their money.

We MUST demand transparency, accountability, and honest "citizen-led" due diligence when a "crony capitalism" deal comes to the General Assembly.

Unless and until the citizens of South Carolina get serious about rooting out the "Crony Capitalist Good Ole Boys Club" in Columbia, we will continue to experience government in South Carolina "Of the Powerful, By the Powerful, and For the Powerful" instead of government "Of the People, By the People, and For the People."