

01/20/2021

To The Honorable Barnstable County Commissioners:

I have spent the better part of 42 years living and working, living and loving the Cape. Our way of life is unique and the community holds few secrets regarding personalities, and the passions of those that live here. We are a diverse community, even within the ranks of political parties. There is a common bond on the Cape and that is to our way of life and environment. I've resided in towns Bourne, Sandwich, Barnstable, Brewster, and Chatham. I've spent the last 24 years in the Internet business, operating one of the regions tourism websites, and I was a co-founder of the Cape Cod Internet Council. In 2005, I provided the first live streaming broadcast to CBS TV of the Christa Worthing Murder trial and then some of the clients I served were NBC TV in Boston, The Boston Marathon, and produced the Cape Cod Baseball League Game of The Week" for WBZ, and introduced live streaming to The Cape Cod Media Center. Prior to this I worked as a talk show host on WXTK, and I'm sharing all this to give you a frame of reference as to how my experience has shaped my views. I have friends and clients with different views than mine, views that differ, and yet we have stayed close and found things in common, and we can rank each others political views without ranker and in good humor, while enjoying our relationships in some cases over 20+ years.

It became clear when I worked for WXTK that alternative truths by the rantings from Rush Limbaugh, and alike, jarred my sense reason and logic, and I was turned off by this brand of self promoting, demonizing entertainment. I personally experienced how hate infected some listeners when I received an anti-Semitic, bullying phone call, at home, which was instrumental in my realizing that talk radio was not for me. If you remember my broadcasts you may understand the other reasons regarding career choice. I never could have imagined in 1993 that the impact that the fallacious claims of First Amendment Rights from those that fueled the passions of some listeners of the talk radio genre, that was combined with simultaneous introduction of the Internet could have led to the attack on the Capital by an insurrectionist movement. This to me this is the consequence that liberty without limits has delivered. We have all witnessed this take place over the past 25+ years, and frankly we let it go unanswered and unchallenged. Some found a political advantage to the listeners of talk radio, and some found it entertaining. The danger arose when those that were entertained forgot that these views were only opinions, and not based in facts. What made it worse was when some who ruled the airways believed it as well. Those that were really talented spun false claims that their opinions were protected under the Constitution in Article One's Freedom Of Speech provisions. This only the case if the intent of that speech does not interfere with the liberty of others, and liberty is in part what the Constitution guaranties our pursuit of. Article One is protected speech when the laws that dictate the pursuit of liberty are not denied others and infringed upon by those that would act to deny liberty from those that hold other views. This is where this whole thing about "equal justice under the law" comes in. So, when speech is unchecked then and it leads to violence than that is called incitement to violence. When violence occurs its called anarchy, and worse, sedition is when all of our rights are denied. We all have hoped that that people would self govern their speech and options, however when they don't our lawmakers are forced to make new laws, which is what we all would hope to avoid, especially those that think the government is plotting to take away our liberty. When in fact those that buy into all the conspiracy nonsense are the ones that the rest of us need protection from this incitement to violence. Masters like Limbaugh, Trump, or other bullies that leave those that would disagree with them in fear cannot be tolerated without people off reason speaking truth to power. The language that blames government and casts aspersions upon liberals and progressives, as well as conservative voices are not voices that are treasonous, they are part and parcel of free society, and those that would act to quiet those cant rule the

day. It was and is the incitement by those voices in positions of power that fueled the seditious actions at the Capital that ultimately led us to this moment. This is what manifested because of the unchecked claims regarding Article One of the Constitution is masterfully abused. This is where those that would use speech to influence others for the sake of commercial entertainment, or ignorance to the responsibilities that we each have in exercising our rights, can only be viewed as anarchists at best, and treasonous in the extreme. The extreme is what we witnessed on 1/6. Now we are finally understanding the dangers that the last quarter century have had to our democracy, and a call to those that truly understand this, both Democrat and Republican alike, of good selfless intent, must respond because those that bought into this are in every aspect of our society, and Cape Cod is no exception. It is these views that need to be clearly spoken to, and those that are elected and appointed to uphold the Constitution need to step forward and educate our community, and those who are employed to enforce these regulations and laws. There is no room within government to leave these events unanswered.

It's convenient to sit back and stay silent, while we shake our heads and respond by saying "what can I do about it," or it's far too big for me to have any impact. We've done this for way too long, and the results are self evident.. Today a dozen Guardsmen were among the ranks of those that have ties to QANON and/or questionable statements that would preclude them from serving in Washington, and relieved from duty. How far does this go, and what are elected officials on Cape Cod doing to protect ALL those that live in Barnstable County, These concerns within the law enforcement community are obvious, given that the DA's office, the police, and public servants are sworn to uphold an unbiased implementation of the law. It is still unclear regarding the role that a few police officers played in supporting the violent insurrection of 01/06, In Washington, however, the very thought of this is on the Cape Cod is an Orwellian tale raises concerns that cannot not be ignored by those in the law enforcement institutions on the Cape. With the overtness in support of Donald Trump, by the DA and the Sheriff, and the broad support in general by the police of his candidacy, what do we really know in terms of the sentiments of those that hold positions, and not knowing creates mistrust. Seditious beliefs that the election was stolen cannot be reinforced by those in power and law enforcement attitudes are something that each of us must trust. Those that have been elected, or appointed as the guardians of the Constitution by their oath to office, have a responsibility more than ever to make public the policies, procedures and institutional regulations that screen for those whose beliefs could impact the impartial and unbiased enforcement of public safety. I call upon the Barnstable County Commissioners unanimous vote to support establishing, and organizing an online forum that invites the police chiefs of each town, the District Attorney, and The Sheriff to participate. I further call upon each them who are invited to join this online forum to examine the benefit to all, including themselves, by supporting this endeavor, so as to provide the public the reassurance required to build greater trust in those institutions they so honorably serve. Those of us that live in Barnstable are responsible in doing our part to insure that the law is unmistakable in its execution, and that this clarity of procedures and polices further enhances to those that are in public service the trust they deserve with nothing nothing less than complete public support.

This is not a time to sit back with a wait and see attitude. We have, and 01/06/2021 is what became of us. I believe that there has never been a more important time for public confidence to be reinforced than now. The clarity that comes from a unified message from the leadership of our elected and appointed officials in Barnstable County could not be more timely and vital than it is now. I further call for a series of public forums where the public can have their concerns addressed, so as to restore any concerns of the role that our local government has in the execution of these duties.

The time for one message to be clearly stated is now, and by doing it will benefit the entire community

Steve Lipman