

Harry G. McConnell

Ormond Beach, Florida 32174

February 22, 2020

Senator Marco Rubio  
284 Russell Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Rubio:

With this letter is a copy of another some of my friends and I are offering to the American public, which we address and identify as We the People. We respectfully request that you read both letters, believing that you need to know the extent of our concern about the condition of our country and our fear for its future. We see the chatter from various analysts, commentators, pundits, journalists and politicians, but little from ordinary citizens. We do not undertake to speak for anyone but ourselves, but we do believe that many of our fellow Americans are in substantial agreement, and our collective views should be presented to our representatives in Congress.

We are surprised and disappointed by the failure of the United States Senate to confront the corruption, incompetence, immorality and illegality of Trump and his administration. We recall the leadership of great Roman senators whose power was based on the force of their ideas and the morality of their actions. Cato and Cicero come to mind. We have had giants in our own Senate. Our republic's early years saw Henry Clay, John Calhoun and Daniel Webster, whose views were very different but whose resolve to defend the independence of the Congress help preserve our system of checks and balances. More recently, Howard Baker and Barry Goldwater – need I remind you that they were republicans? – showed We the People how our Congress should deal with a Republican president who put his own interests above those of the country, and then tried to cover up his actions. John McCain attempted to lead the Senate by example, but found insufficient support among his colleagues and obviously did not prevail. We wonder how he would have performed his duties during the impeachment trial, but I guarantee you he would not have been seen as a doormat, prostrate before Trump. What effect would he have had on you (“Little Marco” was Trump’s label as I remember), Lyin’ Ted and the rest of Trump’s senate enablers? Not much I suspect.

We have watched in dismay as the carnage progressed during the past three years. You will remember that Trump employed that word in his inaugural; ironic, isn't it? We recognize Trump as a chronic and habitual liar, and have set out our position about him in the letter to We the People. But we must pose a question to you: What is your motivation in acquiescing in Trump's attempt to impose an autocracy? Are you fearful of losing your seat in the Senate? Henry Clay said he would rather be right than be president. Of course he meant “morally right”, and I am confident he would have said that he would rather be right, leading the country in the morally and

legally right way, than be a senator. Winning legislative battles to comply with the whims of a corrupt president does not do honor to the Senate, and undermines our system of government. None of the signers of the We the People letter have been very politically active, but we know being a senator is a good gig. We have been surprised and disappointed to discover that many of you seem to value your seat more than your oath to defend our Constitution.

Many of the signers of the We the People letter military veterans. Five of us were swift boat skippers, working the Mekong, the Bassac and canals of the Delta in the waning months of the Vietnam war. One flew in an A6 into Haiphong air space defended by AA and SAM installations, and another served on a PG off Seafloat and in the Gulf of Thailand. One signer served in Danang as a data processing expert, and our sole Air Force signer worked at the big Bien Hoa base. After their service, many signers went on to get advance degrees, including Ph.Ds, J.D.s and other doctorates. All had modestly successful and rewarding careers, but none had the type of success Trump continually brags about. Of course none of the signers are frauds and failures, to borrow the words of the only Republican senator who seems to have retained some semblance of honor in the face of Trump's corruption. I mention this because you should know who is encouraging you to rethink your role in what is sure to be a trying time ahead.

Confident that you are a student of history, we remind you that the rise of Adolf Hitler was facilitated by a compliant legislature. No doubt you are aware that the Reichstag's Enabling Law of 1933 gave power to Hitler to enact laws without the involvement of anyone else. That couldn't happen here, could it?

We signers lack the platform of a United States Senator, so we remind you that we count on you to protect us. It is your duty to do so. However, we have come to learn that we cannot count on you or your Republican colleagues, so we are addressing We the People with the hope that if enough citizens come forward we will put a little starch in the limp fabric of the institutions established with the purpose of protecting government of the people, by the people and for the people. We signers are from different states, but we remind you that you are a United States Senator, sent by the people of Florida to serve the entire population, not just the voters of your home state, and certainly not the unwise and unjust impulses of the most divisive and corrosive man ever to be trusted with the responsibility of head of state.

Let me borrow Jefferson's apology for such a long letter. I did not have time to write a short one. Time is running out to stop this aspiring autocrat, and we know that you see the danger. We will be watching your actions, and trusting that you will be leading us, from the front, in the right direction. If you care to respond, I will be happy to share it with my friends.

Submitted with respect for the office of United States Senator.

  
Harry G. McConnell