

WAVING THE CONSTITUTION AT THOSE WHO IGNORE IT



I waved my pocket copy of the Constitution at Nancy Pelosi on July 19, 2008. Khizr Khan waved his at Donald Trump on July 28, 2016.

In real time Thursday night, I caught only the final few seconds of Khizr Khan's powerful speech at the Democratic National Convention in Philadelphia. Through the rest of Thursday and Friday, more and more of the details of the speech flitted through my Twitter stream and then my heart was warmed when I saw photos of Khan pulling out his pocket copy of the Constitution and waving it at Donald Trump. Almost exactly eight years ago, I had done the same thing, waving my pocket copy at Nancy Pelosi, who then was Speaker of the House and appearing at Netroots Nation in Austin.

Khan was confronting Trump about his campaign in which he had noted that "Trump consistently smears the character of Muslims. He disrespects other minorities, women, judges, even his own party leadership. He vows to build walls and ban us from this country." (Quotes come from this

copy of Khan's transcript.) Khan then continued, presumably in reference to banning Muslims from the US: "Donald Trump, you are asking Americans to trust you with our future. Let me ask you: Have you even read the U.S. Constitution? I will gladly lend you my copy."

In my case, as I noted here and then in a follow-up a couple of months later here, I was urging Pelosi to act on the clear evidence that the George W. Bush administration had committed war crimes including torture. Sadly, as we now approach the end of two terms with Barrack Obama as President, no significant Bush Administration official has faced any consequences for the torture and other war crimes carried out in our name. Further, despite clear-cut evidence of many crimes by banksters in the massive foreclosure fraud crisis that dispossessed a significant proportion of the US middle class, no significant prosecutions have been undertaken by the Department Formerly Known as Justice.

Khan is so right to wave the Constitution in Trump's face. Note that a central feature at recent Trump rallies has been endless chanting of "Lock her up", calling for prosecution of Hillary Clinton for crimes associated with her use of a private email server (and presumably also for Benghazi!!!) while serving as Secretary of State.

And that is where I see potential huge danger for our dear Constitution. We already have seen failure to prosecute crimes of tremendous impact to the world and to ordinary citizens here at home. Should Trump win, how could a "Justice Department" that already has shown a willingness to ignore the law in response to the desires of two presidents in a row refuse Trump's insistence that Clinton be incarcerated through massive overcharging of any technical violation (if it even occurred, which is a huge stretch on its own) on the email front and totally fabricated charges on Benghazi.

Thank you, Khizr Khan for reminding our country that we are founded on what should be a sacred

document that lays out how we should establish justice. And thank you for the sacrifice of your son Humayun, who was lost while taking part in an ill-advised war in which many of the war crimes discussed above were carried out.

Here is the full video of Khan's speech.
Standing next to him is his wife, Ghazala Khan.