

# Nonsense on Stilts

Nobody asked but ...

I am listening to the audiobook by Andrew Napolitano, *Lies the Government Told You*, narrated by the Judge himself. An English proverb holds that a lie can be halfway around the world before the truth gets its boots on. It also appears to be the case that a government can be shot through with corruption before the ink is dried on its Constitution. Unfortunately, central plans such as the US Constitution are in an orderly form only while the ink is still drying. That order soon begins to be disorder as it deteriorates on its way to reorganizing toward a more natural order.

There is one particular chapter in the Judge's book that has affected me more than others. It deals with the shambles that is the American justice system. *Lie #12: Everyone Is Innocent Until Proven Guilty* is a horror show of miscreant atrocities from lawyers, judges, jurors, witnesses, prosecutors, law enforcement, bureaucrats, and the like. Such atrocities as these began during the terms of George Washington and continue to be ricocheting bullets in the innards of the dying republic.

The Judge covers it all with actual examples — lies, perjuries, overly narrow constructions, overly broad constructions, intentional and unintentional misconstructions, fallacies, myths. Two illustrations struck me in particular. In one case, a man on death row produced substantial evidence that someone else had done the crime in question (he had 5 reliable witnesses to that effect). The courts ruled that he had already had his day in court, and that he should be obtaining a pardon. The governor in question was more interested in establishing that he was tough on crime. The likely innocent man was executed for procedural reasons and ulterior motives. In the second case, a trucker who did not trust banks was carrying his entire life savings with him. A cop making a casual stop and frisk at a rest area, confiscated the money on the theory that a large amount of cash was evidence of illegal drug dealing. It took an incredible effort and a huge commitment of time on the truck driver's part to get his money back.

I recommend this book to anyone who wants to learn "what could go wrong?" in the legal/government/industrial complex. I even more heartily suggest a reading for those who still view the state as a system of unicorns and rainbows.

— Kilgore Forelle