

Words Poorly Used #144 — Emolument

Arcane words, those wearing dated but courtly finery, are difficult to process, but especially so when they are pounded into the Constitution, like a round peg into a square hole. These are odd interlopers of unfamiliar mien.

How many times does someone other than a “constitutional” lawyer run across words such as “emolument?” And beyond that, how often does one understand the meaning.

Particularly since most purported definitions are smoke and mirrors in the hands of those who do not wish the unwashed masses well. Even the words “militia” and “arms” are debated endlessly as our society desires gun control and is willing to destroy consistency, reliability, and content to get what they want. Most are demanding slavery, and they will not be quiet until they get it, “good and hard,” as Mencken said.

But at least, the Second Amendment is in pretty run-of-the-mill language. The problem is in the alacrity with which rentseekers will ignore the plain meanings of things.

But “emoluments,” for goodness’ sake, despite its regalia, is just another word for bribes or exploitation. But because it has a fancy veneer all the partisans and their mouthpieces feel as though the word can have every meaning in the universe. But clearly the state will out-interpret regular people at every turn. How can you butcher the Second Amendment, if you can’t have a field day with “emoluments?”

“On which side of the shadow you stand decides a word’s meaning.” Written by Steven Erickson.

— Kilgore Forelle