

Chapter 9-The Militia

Lately there has been much debate about the militia. What is it? What is its' purpose? How does it relate to the government (state and federal)? The complexity of this subject is based, in large part, on its' simplicity. Because the militia was so common, during the time when the Constitution was written, there was little reason to explain it. Every man, woman, and child knew what the militia was and what role it played in the communities of the early Americans.

I will first attempt to describe what the militia is and what it is not. Second, I will attempt to convey the importance to all Americans of the militia mentality, its lifestyle, and dedication to responsible citizenry. And lastly, I will attempt to convey what the militia should mean to every community and citizen in this nation, as it could mean the very salvation of our nation.

Contrary to popular 21st century belief, the militia is not a group of anti-government yahoos who are out on the back forty of uncle Jeb's farm shooting and playing army. No disrespect to uncle Jeb. In the early years of this nation, the militia was made up of every able-bodied man in the area. When cattle rustlers made off with part of the herd, a posse of militia was gathered from among the locals, and they set off to bring the scoundrels back. The sheriff could then present him to the judge, find them guilty, and "hang em."

When our nation was threatened by the British, the Continental Army could in no way resist the might of the Empire. It was the ordinary citizenry who gathered their own arms and responded to the call of the nation. They fought in every major battle, and many minor ones, all the way through the civil war. There were entire units made up of only militia "volunteers". The very essence of the militia is the community, for one is more apt to fight harder for his neighbor than for a stranger.