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Bush on the Constitution: 'It's just a goddamned piece of paper'

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By **DOUG THOMPSON**
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Last month, Republican Congressional leaders filed into the Oval Office to meet with President George W. Bush and talk about renewing the controversial USA Patriot Act.

Several provisions of the act, passed in the shell shocked period immediately following the 9/11 terrorist attacks, caused enough anger that liberal groups like the American Civil Liberties Union had joined forces with prominent conservatives like Phyllis Schlafly and Bob Barr to oppose renewal.

GOP leaders told Bush that his hardcore push to renew the more onerous provisions of the act could further alienate conservatives still mad at the President from his botched attempt to nominate White House Counsel Harriet Miers to the Supreme Court.

"I don't give a goddamn," Bush retorted. "I'm the President and the Commander-in-Chief. Do it my way."

"Mr. President," one aide in the meeting said. "There is a valid case that the provisions in this law undermine the Constitution."

"Stop throwing the Constitution in my face," Bush screamed back. "It's just a goddamned piece of paper!"

I've talked to three people present for the meeting that day and they all confirm that the President of the United States called the Constitution "a goddamned piece of paper."

And, to the Bush Administration, the Constitution of the United States is little more than toilet paper stained from all the shit that this group of power-mad despots have dumped on the

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freedoms that “goddamned piece of paper” used to guarantee.

Attorney General Alberto Gonzales, while still White House counsel, wrote that the “Constitution is an outdated document.”

Put aside, for a moment, political affiliation or personal beliefs. It doesn't matter if you are a Democrat, Republican or Independent. It doesn't matter if you support the invasion of Iraq or not. Despite our differences, the Constitution has stood for two centuries as the defining document of our government, the final source to determine – in the end – if something is legal or right.

Every federal official – including the President – who takes an oath of office swears to “uphold and defend the Constitution of the United States.”

Supreme Court Justice Antonin Scalia says he cringes when someone calls the Constitution a “living document.”

““Oh, how I hate the phrase we have—a 'living document,’” Scalia says. “We now have a Constitution that means whatever we want it to mean. The Constitution is not a living organism, for Pete's sake.”

As a judge, Scalia says, “I don't have to prove that the Constitution is perfect; I just have to prove that it's better than anything else.”

President Bush has proposed seven amendments to the Constitution over the last five years, including a controversial amendment to define marriage as a “union between a man and woman.” Members of Congress have proposed some 11,000 amendments over the last decade, ranging from repeal of the right to bear arms to a Constitutional ban on abortion.

Scalia says the danger of tinkering with the Constitution comes from a loss of rights.

“We can take away rights just as we can grant new ones,” Scalia warns. “Don't think that it's a one-way street.”

And don't buy the White House hype that the USA Patriot Act is a necessary tool to fight terrorism. It is a dangerous law that infringes on the rights of every American citizen and, as one brave aide told President Bush, something that undermines the Constitution of the United States.

But why should Bush care? After all, the Constitution is just “a goddamned piece of paper.”

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Who is this [Thompson](#) guy anyway?



