

Wednesday, September 19, 2007

When cops overstep their bounds, don't be complacent.

Â The only legitimate purpose of police is to serve the governed, and not to be agents of fear, control, and intimidation. As I discussed yesterday, the police were not exercising legitimate authority on September 17 with Andrew Meyer,Â when he pontificated to and questioned John Kerry.Â InÂ the above video of Andrew Meyer, the police, and John Kerry, we see a mix of audience members expressing discomfort and outrage over the police actions, cheering, and indifference. Â Where does the indifference come from? Fear? Habit? Numbness to all the ugliness in the world that constantly assaults our sensibilities? We are all in this life experience together, and cannot afford to be indifferent to the struggles of those around us, even if that means making real and costly personal sacrifices. Â John Kerry's response on September 18 seemed to include a position that once the police stepped in that the matter was out of his hands and in police hands. Is that so? Fortunately,Â Donald Rumsfeld -- who does not count me as a fan -- in this videoÂ uploaded by my lawyer brother Marc Randazza, shows how easy and essential it is for a government official to put the brakes on police otherwise chomping at the bit to wrongfully arrest a speaker exercising the First Amendment right to dissent.Â If politicians do not want to hear dissent, they should avoid public appearances and find another line of work. Jon Katz.Â ADDENDUM: Of all places, the blog ofÂ USA Today -- which newspaper I long have associated with shamefully oversimplified and overly-superficial McNewsÂ (butÂ with a good sports page, I am told by sports junkies) -- has some of the most comprehensive and useful coverage on this story as compared to the other traditional news outlets.

Posted by Jon Katz in Criminal Defense at 06:00

The Rumsfeld video is great. Great find.
Anonymous on Sep 19 2007, 12:45

Thanks, Scott, for your message. The credit for finding this video link goes to my brother lawyer Marc Randazza. Thanks. Jon
Anonymous on Sep 22 2007, 22:22

I must respectfully decline the credit for uploading it. I merely found it and linked to it on my blog to compare Rumsfeld's behavior to Kerry's.

Nevertheless, I am honored to be thanked, and send back your good thoughts ten fold.
Anonymous on Sep 23 2007, 14:18