

If Ted Cruz Is Ineligible, So Were the First 8 Presidents

Ted Cruz is gaining on The Donald, you see. And so finally the question of his eligibility to serve as our 45th U.S. president is fair game. Oh, sure, Ted grew up in Houston, Texas. And, oh, sure, his mother, who happened to be over the border in Canada when Ted was born, is a U.S. citizen, herself born in Wilmington, Delaware, which, oh, sure, automatically makes Ted a U.S. citizen from birth.

But, hey! I, the guys down at the Elks Lodge with their pocket constitutions and whatnot, and Donald Trump, who, with his own political self-interests in mind has suddenly flip-flopped on the subject, all disagree. Ted Cruz is ineligible to serve as president of the United States based upon our extreme-minority take on the phrase “natural born citizen.”

For that matter, and based upon our own arbitrary and narrow definition—I know it’s not defined in the Constitution, but anyhow—rather than being grandfathered in, and to be fair to future generations, eight of the first nine U.S. presidents should have been ineligible to serve as well.

Since they were all born as British citizens in the British colonies, George Washington, John Adams, Thomas Jefferson, et al., should have been, one and all, constitutionally ineligible.

Sure, the world’s on fire and America is spiraling down the global toilet bowl of life, but before we start worrying about tertiary issues like “national security,” “the economy” or “illegal immigration,” I, The Donald and the boys down at the Elks Lodge want—nay, we demand—that Ted Cruz be immediately arrested, tagged in the ear and bussed back to Calgary posthaste.

And then, let's get about the business of impeaching (posthumously, of course) James Madison, James Monroe, Andrew Jackson and the rest of them immigrants already mentioned above, before we hold even one more debate. (Marty Van Buren is cool. That boy's as red-blooded as they come).

Even 2008 presidential candidate and Marco Rubio supporter John McCain is on board. When recently asked about Ted Cruz's eligibility to run for president, McCain responded, "I think there is a question. I'm not a constitutional scholar on that, but I think it's worth looking into. I don't think it's illegitimate to look into it."

A McCain aide, whom he affectionately called "Ms. Bunny," then leaned over and was heard through a hot mic whispering, "Um, senator. Don't forget. You were born in Panama."

To which Sen. McCain replied that he was pretty sure Panama was a small town in central Arizona, and that the Panama Canal was built, some years ago, for the primary purpose of moving tourist swag across the Colorado River from the Grand Canyon's North Rim to its South.

OK. All that said, I'll admit it. The closest thing we have to an actual definition of "natural born citizen" comes to us by way of the English common law. Statutes in England prior to the Revolutionary War, for instance, define "natural born subject" as follows: "The children of all natural born subjects born out of the ligeance [i.e. out of England] of Her Majesty, Her Heirs and Successors shall be deemed and adjudged to be natural born subjects of this Kingdom to all intents, constructions, and purposes whatsoever."

And sure, there are people like Neal Katyal and Paul Clement, both constitutional experts and former U.S. solicitors general, who disagree with me, The Donald and the Elks Lodge boys. Writing together in the Harvard Law Review, these two Washington-Jefferson-Cruz sycophants explain that, "We may

have different ideas about the ideal candidate in the next presidential election, but we agree on one important principle: voters should be able to choose from all constitutionally eligible candidates, free from spurious arguments that a U.S. citizen at birth is somehow not constitutionally eligible to serve as president simply because he was delivered at a hospital abroad.”

Yeah, so what? Harvard? Cruz graduated from Harvard Law. Need I say more?

These men claim “the phrase ‘natural born citizen’ has a specific meaning: namely, someone who was a U.S. citizen at birth with no need to go through a naturalization proceeding at some later time.” They further argue “all the sources routinely used to interpret the Constitution” are abundantly clear on this near-universal definition.

“And Congress,” they conclude, “has made equally clear from the time of the framing of the Constitution to the current day that, subject to certain residency requirements on the parents, someone born to a U.S. citizen parent generally becomes a U.S. citizen without regard to whether the birth takes place in Canada, the Canal Zone or the continental United States.”

But who cares what these ivory tower Harvard highbrows think anyway?