

WHERE'S THE LINE?

YOU Are the Answer to What Ails America

Class 1 Handout · The People Are Sovereign · iGovern.us

A six-week course: the 5-Minute Method to restore American self-government

CLASS 1 AT A GLANCE

The Problem: Government left unattended — like a two-year-old — WILL make a mess. The mess is nearly a \$40 trillion national debt, which the U.S. Senate unanimously declared the No. 1 threat to national security, \$2 trillion annual deficits, and \$1 trillion+ in yearly interest. (REMINDER: It takes 32,000 years to count to 1 trillion by ones...!)

The Principle: That We the People are sovereign is “the first and fundamental principle in the science of [American] government” (James Wilson). WE are the “boss” (the servant sovereign) — and the buck stops with us.

Why It Matters: *“It does not require a majority to prevail, but rather an irate, tireless minority keen to set brush fires of freedom in people’s minds.” — Samuel Adams*

Homework: (1) Discuss with someone why it is so revolutionary that in American government the People are sovereign? (2) Share three things – good news or bad news – about being Servant-Sovereigns in America. (3) Invite a friend (or several) to Class 2.

Welcome to the Journey!

Imagine the government worked for YOU ... and not the other way around! By the time you complete this course, YOU — along with at least 10,000 other people in at least 10 States (the 10×10 Initiative) — will KNOW how to act like the “boss” of your government again ... in as little as 5 minutes a week.

You know the drill: bad news and good news. The **Bad News** — WE are responsible for the mess our government has made. The **Good News** — WE are response-able to do something about it. And the **Best News** — complete all six classes and YOU will KNOW the simple, actionable steps to fix the governing mess we are in ... in as little as 5 minutes a week.

The Six KNOWs

1. **YOU Are the Sovereign.** We the People are the highest authority — the boss of the American governing enterprise. All governing power is derived from the People, and we are its only safe depository.
2. **The Exceptional Structure of Our Government.** The limits, divisions, balance, checks, and restraints on governing power — not any politician or policy — secure our unalienable rights to life, liberty, property, self-governance, and the pursuit of happiness.
3. **States Restore & Maintain the Structure.** States are responsible to restore and maintain the State–Federal balance and the checks and restraints on federal overreach.

4. **The Character & Ability of the State Agents YOU Hire.** YOU are responsible to hire (elect), train, and sustain good, wise, capable State leaders as trusted fiduciaries of your sovereign responsibility.
5. **The 3 Ps for Delegating Your Sovereign Vision.** Delegate and communicate your governing responsibility through your State leaders: Personal, Professional, and Persistent.
6. **Leverage YOUR Voice & Act Like the Boss.** Multi-Level Liberty — Lift Where We Stand. Learn to leverage your governing voice right where you live.

We will frequently recur to these fundamental principles until they are written on our hearts and minds — so we act like the sovereign leaders the Founders intended us to be and “secure the blessings of liberty” for the next 250 years.

The Problem: “Don’t See Me, Mom!”

Leave a two-year-old unattended and he WILL make a mess — flour footprints straight to the pantry. It’s not a bug, it’s a feature — and it’s not the two-year-old’s fault. The Framers knew government is just the same: left unattended, it WILL make a mess. So they engineered our exceptional structure with limits, balance, divisions, checks, and restraints so we can keep an eye on it all the time. When we don’t — the mess is not the government’s fault. It’s ours. It’s time we act like the adults in the room. Our two-year-olds are counting on us.

“Money and power ... tempt special interests to buy the politicians who wield power. The whole process feeds on itself. Everyone is rewarded by ignoring constitutional restraints while expanding and complicating the bureaucratic state.”

— Congressman Ron Paul

“For my part, whatever anguish of spirit it may cost, I am willing to know the whole truth; to know the worst, and to provide for it.”

— Patrick Henry

Government’s Mess — The Numbers

- National debt: \$40 trillion — unanimously declared the No. 1 threat to national security (S.Res. 600, March 2024) — with interest payments now over \$1 trillion a year, more than national defense.
- Annual deficits near \$2 trillion — with no plan in Washington for spending ever to be less than revenue.
- Lobbying Congress returns roughly 6,000% on average — 22,000% for multinationals and 76,000% for drug companies — while a normal business earns about 11%.
- Members of Congress spend about two hours of a ten-hour day legislating; the rest is dialing for dollars. Nine of the ten wealthiest zip codes surround D.C.
- The regulatory burden costs about \$2 trillion a year, and the average person commits three federal felonies a day without knowing it.

Fill in the Blanks

1. The Framers knew that government is just like a ____ - ____ - ____.
2. If we don’t keep our eye on our government and it makes a mess, it’s not the _____’s fault — it’s _____.

3. The 2024 Senate resolution identified the national _____ as the top threat to national security.
4. Lobbying Congress yields an estimated _____% return on investment for drug companies.
5. The average person commits _____ federal felonies daily.

KNOW #1: The People Are the Sovereign

Sovereign (n.): *“A supreme lord or ruler; one who possesses the highest authority without control ... Supreme in power; possessing supreme dominion.” — Noah Webster, American Dictionary of the English Language (1828)*

When newly elected President George Washington asked James Wilson to teach him and his first Cabinet the new Constitution, Wilson taught:

“The dread and redoubtable sovereign, when traced to his ultimate and genuine source, has been found, as he ought to have been found, in the free and independent man.”

— James Wilson

This is the revolutionary idea of American government. The Framers did not rely on electing just the right president or Congress — they intended the **structure itself** to secure our rights ... if We the People — the Servant Sovereigns — always secure the structure of our government.

“We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal ... endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights ... that to secure these rights governments are instituted among men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed.”

— Declaration of Independence, July 4, 1776

“... all power was originally lodged in, and consequently is derived from, the people. We should wear it as a breastplate, and buckle it on as our armour.”

— George Mason

“Every government degenerates when trusted to the rulers of the people alone. The people themselves, therefore, are its only safe depositories.”

— Thomas Jefferson

“A Republic, if you can keep it.”

— Benjamin Franklin, 1787

Yet barely one-third of American sovereigns show up in a general election year to “hire” the State agents through whom they fulfill their sovereign responsibility. Any organization whose boss barely shows up, doesn’t know the employees, gives no job descriptions, and never follows up will fail 100% of the time. To fix it, we simply reverse it: stand up, show up, and speak up — for at least 5 minutes a week.



NEW — The Documentary Record: Settled Doctrine, Not Theory

That the People are sovereign — and that the People, acting through their States, bear the right and responsibility to restore the State–Federal balance — is not a political opinion. It is the explicit, repeated teaching of the Founders, the Presidents, and the Supreme Court for over two centuries. Six propositions, each anchored in primary authority:

Proposition	Primary Authority
1. The people are the ultimate sovereign authority over all governments	Declaration of Independence (1776); Va. Declaration of Rights, Art. II; Wilson, Pa. Ratifying Convention (1787); McCulloch v. Maryland (1819)
2. Governments are created by the people to secure rights — not to hold power for its own sake	Declaration of Independence; Mason, Va. Declaration, Art. III; Jefferson, First Inaugural (1801)
3. The constitutional structure divides power between State and national governments specifically to protect individual liberty	Madison, Federalist No. 51; Printz v. United States (1997); Bond v. United States (2011)
4. The States are the primary channel through which the people defend their rights against national overreach	Hamilton, Federalist No. 28; Madison, Federalist No. 46; Jefferson, First Inaugural; Gregory v. Ashcroft (1991)
5. The people bear both the right and the responsibility to reform government when it departs from constitutional limits	Declaration of Independence; Va. Declaration, Art. III; Hamilton, Federalist No. 28
6. Constitutional protections operate only when citizens understand their rights and exercise them	Hamilton, Federalist No. 28 (“provided the citizens understand their rights and are disposed to defend them”); New York v. United States (1992)

Key Voices from the Record

“The supreme, absolute and uncontrollable authority remains with the people ... They can delegate it in such proportions, to such bodies, on such terms, and under such limitations, as they think proper. ... The fee-simple remains in the people at large, and by this Constitution they do not part with it.”

— James Wilson, Pennsylvania Ratifying Convention, 1787

“The ultimate authority, wherever the derivative may be found, resides in the people alone. ... The federal and State governments are in fact but different agents and trustees of the people. ... The State governments, with the people on their side, would be able to repel the danger.”

— James Madison, Federalist No. 46 (1788)

“The people, by throwing themselves into either scale, will infallibly make it preponderate. If their rights are invaded by either, they can make use of the other as the instrument of redress ... provided the citizens understand their rights and are disposed to defend them.”

— Alexander Hamilton, Federalist No. 28 (1787)

“The support of the State governments in all their rights, as the most competent administrations for our domestic concerns and the surest bulwarks against antirepublican tendencies.”

— Thomas Jefferson, First Inaugural Address, 1801

“... that government of the people, by the people, for the people, shall not perish from the earth.”

— Abraham Lincoln, Gettysburg Address, 1863

“All of us need to be reminded that the Federal Government did not create the States; the States created the Federal Government. ... Our government has no power except that granted it by the people.”

— Ronald Reagan, First Inaugural Address, 1981

“Perhaps the principal benefit of the federalist system is a check on abuses of government power. ... In the tension between federal and state power lies the promise of liberty.”

— Justice Sandra Day O’Connor, Gregory v. Ashcroft, 501 U.S. 452 (1991)

“The Constitution protects us from our own best intentions: It divides power among sovereigns and among branches of government precisely so that we may resist the temptation to concentrate power in one location as an expedient solution to the crisis of the day.”

— Justice Antonin Scalia, Printz v. United States, 521 U.S. 898 (1997)

“Federalism protects the liberty of the individual from arbitrary power.”

— Justice Anthony Kennedy, Bond v. United States, 564 U.S. 211 (2011)

Frequent Recurrence to Fundamental Principles

“No free government, or the blessing of liberty, can be preserved to any people but by ... frequent recurrence to fundamental principles.”

— George Mason — echoed in Utah Constitution, Art. I, § 27

Hall-of-Fame coach Vince Lombardi opened every spring training with his world-champion Green Bay Packers the same way: *“Gentlemen, this is a football.”* Just so, we — and the State leaders through whom we exercise our sovereign responsibility — must return frequently to the fundamental principles of our exceptional governing structure. No State legislator gets trained on these principles. We’re the boss; training our agents is our job — as Servant Leaders, not bossy bosses.

Can you find a “fundamental principles” provision in YOUR State constitution? Look it up and bring it to Class 2:

Stories to Remember

“I Was Born to Be a King” — the Son of Louis XVI

When France dethroned King Louis XVI, the revolutionaries seized his young son. If they could corrupt the prince, they could control him. For six months they threw every temptation at him — and he refused them all. Exhausted, they demanded to know why. The boy answered: ***“I cannot do what you ask. I***

was born to be a king." In America, YOU were born to be a king, a queen — the sovereign. Good sovereigns KNOW their government and how it works.

"We Always Meant to Govern Ourselves" — Captain Levi Preston

In 1842, historian Mellen Chamberlain asked Captain Levi Preston, a survivor of the Battle of Lexington, why he fought the British. Locke? Montesquieu? ("We read the Bible.") The stamp tax? ("Didn't know about it.") The tea tax? ("We never drank the stuff.") Then why fight the most powerful army on earth?

"Young man, ... we always had governed ourselves, and we always meant to govern ourselves. They didn't mean we should."

— Captain Levi Preston

Two Questions Our Grandchildren Will Ask

1. Did you see this coming? (*You're here — so, yes.*)

2. What did you do about it?

"Those who expect to reap the blessings of freedom, must, like men, undergo the fatigues of supporting it."

— Thomas Paine

Your Week 1 Call to Action — 5 Minutes

1. Visit iGovern.us and explore the course resources.
2. Join the Impact Community for YOUR State.
3. Share with one other person why "the first and fundamental principle in the science of American government" is that the People are sovereign — that YOU are the boss, the Servant Leader.
4. Invite others to Class 2 next week.

Reflect: Write one thing you could do better this week to be a Servant Leader as the sovereign:

The fine print: you never get a week off again — but on the weeks life is too much, even 30 seconds counts.

"It does not require a majority to prevail, but rather an irate, tireless minority keen to set brush fires of freedom in people's minds."

— Samuel Adams

We're the cavalry. We are the ones we have been waiting for. And we can do this, because — as Condoleezza Rice reminds us — *"I'm American. Nothing's impossible."*

Answer Key (Fill in the Blanks)

1. two-year-old 2. government's / ours 3. debt 4. 78,000 5. three