

**WHO'S
COUNTRY IS
IT ANYWAY?**

**(IT IS YOUR
COUNTRY –
IF YOU DO
YOUR JOB!)**

BY

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Who's Country is It?

It is your country - IF YOU DO YOUR JOB!

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"A citizen should know how to lead like a free man, and follow like a free man".
-- Aristotle

1. INTRODUCTION

"We are the one we are waiting for." You the PEOPLE

It all started innocently enough with a question no one could answer. The question is, "What is citizenship?" That led me to search for an answer to that question. Then a program to help people do the job I discovered is theirs to do. And they better do it, as the history of democracy shows that if they don't do it the democracy goes away. Then it's back to dictatorship. Not a great choice - and it isn't slow. It isn't necessarily something that will happen after you die. It could happen tomorrow or next year. History shows you don't know when. So you had better get busy if you want to be safe and for sure if you want a good life for your children.

The fact is that society is good. Society is a blessing. Civilization brings better learning to help us live better, better medicine to help us live longer, better culture to help us enjoy our world more, etc. Government, however, is a necessary evil. Society is produced by our wants; government is required by our wickedness. The first exists to give us gifts, the other to punish us. As Madison said, "If men were angels, no government would be necessary". So the more you can govern yourselves responsibly, the better off you are.

The idea of this country is that you can bring out your angelic side a little bit more, or at least make ourselves aware of it so that we can get more gifts and less punishment. You can grow up a little and run your own affairs. For after all is said and done, it is up to each of you. Democracy is just about humanity growing up. But you do not come ready to go. Like any new worker you have to be trained to do your job. Right now there is not much of that going on. That's why you & I are getting the kind of politicians you see. As JFK said, "the people will get the kind of government they demand - and deserve". It is all your and my fault - really! The question is

-what are you going to do about it? This book will suggest some easy, quick and doable solutions.

Here you are the rulers of your country and no one ever told you what that means. What are you supposed to do? What is your job in this deal? Do you just stand by and let things happen? That is what most of you are doing right now. What if you owned a McDonalds and did that? Only went there to check on the place every two years? Let someone else pick your manager? Didn't know if they skimmed a little off the top. Didn't care if they gave away freebies to all their friends. How long do you suppose you would stay in business? What if you owned a pro sports team and just let it run by itself. You didn't check on the coach's background before you hired him. Didn't care much about how much money they paid the players and themselves. Didn't care if the players got into trouble with the law now and then. How do you think your team would do?

Yet isn't that pretty much what is happening here and now in this country?

A lot of people right now are wondering if this country is theirs or not. They worry about whether our original ideals are being ignored. That our economy is on the downslide and we will soon be overtaken and replaced as the greatest nation on earth - just to put money in someone's pocket now. Some are afraid that the people are allowing their values to slip and losing the virtues and ideals that have made this the world's greatest nation. Are you are one of these people? If so, do you want to just worry or do you want to DO something about it? This book will show you how.

If you think everything is in good shape; if you think your political party has your interests at heart; if you think the USA has "had it"

and it's too late; if you think "We the People" means someone else will do it and you don't have to worry then you need to read this book. None of those things are true. Read on. You will be surprised how easy it is to learn about your nation and how all of us can reclaim it and keep it great instead of letting it die with gruesome results for us and all the world's ordinary humans.

2. WHAT IS A CITIZEN ANYWAY?

"The preservation of the sacred fire of liberty, and the destiny of the republican model of government is staked on the experiment entrusted to the hands of the American people."

George Washington

Let me start with a story I heard from a guide at the Harry S. Truman Winter White House Museum in Key West, Florida.

On the day before President Truman was to leave office, he packed his belongings in a moving van and left behind two suitcases, one for him and one for his wife. The next day he and GEN Eisenhower left in the Presidential limo for the Capitol where the inauguration was to take place. The Secret Service people put the suitcases in the back of the limo. When they got to the Capitol President Truman had the Secret Service people put the suitcases behind one of the pillars that front the Capitol. Then he went and turned over the Presidency to GEN Eisenhower in a time-honored ceremony. When it was over he headed for the suitcases with his wife Bess. The Secret Service people rushed over to help him but he waved them away saying, "No, you belong to him now", pointing to President Eisenhower". Then he took his wife on his arm and walked to Union Station, bought a ticket for the next train to Kansas City, and went home. On the way he was surrounded by reporters,

who asked him how it felt to be giving up the most powerful office in the country. He answered them saying, " I am not giving up the most powerful office in the country, I am entering it, Citizen".

This is a powerful statement that says it all. You and I, the people, the citizens, hold the most powerful office in this country under our Constitution.

You and I have a job, a very important job, and the most important job in the country. It pays well. It pays in freedom. Freedom then allows creativity which lets you & I work where and how you want and make good money. That is why it is the richest nation on earth. It pays in happiness. You & I are free to do things that make us happy and do. That is why it is the happiest nation on earth. That is why people still immigrate here by the millions. The job is called citizen.

How many of you think of citizenship as a job? What is your job as citizen? How well do you do your job? Should you give this job a high priority in your life? You would think so. It is a powerful job that pays very well and doesn't take too much time or effort. Yet when I tell people about this job called citizen, it seems that nobody understands it. Most people think of citizenship as a right, and it is. They also think it is a responsibility too. But they don't know how to do it. That is the crux of the matter. People want to be good citizens, but don't know how. They never learned about it in school. Most States don't teach citizenship and in the ones that do it is an elective so most citizens have had no training to do their most important job. The ones that do also mainly focus on the workings of the Constitution, which is great, but how many of you will ever need to pass a bill in the Congress? Where is the knowledge you need to help run your local community and elect good people to run the rest? That is not taught. So most people, since they can't pass a bill in the Congress, just forget about

citizenship most of the time and go about their business. They leave it to those people who are activists most of the time. Maybe around election time they try to do what they think is right as best they can.

For citizenship is more than passing a test. It is a job. It requires attention. It requires doing. It requires certain skills. It requires certain attitudes. It requires certain character traits. It is a way of life. After all this is a country of by and for the people, right? How can you have a country like this without the people? This book will tell you about your job as the boss of this country. Most people here I talk to want to be good citizens. There are just two problems. One, they don't think they can do it. Two, they don't think they have enough time. Are you one of these people? This book will show you how easy it is to be an effective citizen. It's not hard and takes very little time if you do it right. It can be simple, easy, and is actually fun. This book will help you make this country great. Believe it or not, that is up to you, and not some other person.

The fact is this nation is the only one where you, the people, are in charge. You're it. The Constitution says so. It then goes on to create a system that allows you to do this. You need to learn how it works in your life, because it does whether you like it or not.

It shows you how to control power and limit it. That is the key and you are in charge of this. All people have a power problem. You and I love it for ourselves and hate for others to have it. Everyone else is that way too. So you and I and everyone else have to work within the system those crazy guys devised. You know Washington, Franklin, Adams, Madison, and Jefferson, those guys. They were real and they gave you a really good, a really special country. They left you a nation where the ordinary person has a chance to have some power and do their own thing. The other choice is to

have someone else take power and tell you what to do. Humans are just that way. They seek power to be safe. Then they don't let go of power when they get it. They then use it to keep it. That is a bad deal for everyone that doesn't agree with whomever is the power.

Your job is to control this urge in yourselves and those you elect. Elect people who are trying to be good for your and their community, State and Nation. Then watch them and make sure they stick to their ideals. It is pretty easy actually. You just have to do it. Learn how to gather information. Learn how to talk to one another to decide what to do for the good of all. Learn how to recognize the power problem and deal with it.

Benjamin Franklin, when a woman asked him, "What have you given us?" said "A republic, if you can keep it". It is up to us, each of us. It is up to you the citizen, you the people. Don't get fooled by this "we" stuff. "We" always turns out to be someone else when "we" don't want to do something. This needs to be done or the nation dies. So think of it as you the people. It is your job to save this nation and keep it. The rest of this book will tell you why and how. It will show you the challenges in doing your job and the gifts that have been given to you. America is at a turning point in history. It will not stand still. Will it go backwards or forwards? You will decide. Remember, the first job of a free people is to remain free. Read on and find out what that job is and how to do it.

3. STORY OF YOU the PEOPLE (Jeff quote from Don McKeag)

Since this is a story of discovery, let me tell you about the voyage. It all started innocently enough. I was retiring and had nothing to

do with the rest of my life so I had to decide whether to relax or work. I decided to do a little of both. I was a government major in college and had worked as a radio announcer so I thought I would go give some speeches. Speeches on why, despite its faults, this country was head and shoulders above the rest. Tell people to stop griping about things and enjoy their good fortune. Most people are lucky to be born in the USA. As a friend of mine said after he came back from a trip overseas, "Wow, I had no idea. The fact is I won the ovarian lottery, I was born in the USA". Bad as it seems the rest of the world is way worse off. If there are problems here, and there surely are, you can fix them. Most other people in the world cannot fix theirs. They are controlled and have no way to fix things themselves.

So I went out to tell my story. Easy money, eh? Just build a speech of an hour or so and go give it. Work about 20 weeks a year to add to my social security and all would be well. I could spend the rest of the time doing the things we all think of in retirement. I would get a motor home maybe and give my speeches while we traveled. Spend time with my kids. What a deal!

I knew there would be an audience, and there was. Problem was, and is, people knew what I was talking about but didn't know how to do it. They lacked self-confidence. They knew they were supposed to help out. They knew they were supposed to be a part of the process. But they didn't think they could. They still had lost the confidence the Founders had placed in them.

They all griped about the way things were but didn't know they were the key. You can't have a country of, by, and for the people if the people aren't part of the process. Right now, by and large, they are not.

Why, was my first question. The answer kept coming back. "We/I don't have enough time." "We/I can't make a difference." Is that true I thought to myself? Certainly I was as guilty as the next person. I just voted without much effort. I just listened to the TV, got turned off by the lies and name calling, and voted for whom I felt like. Many times I would not know who the person was on the ballot. If they were from the next town why would I? How could I know them? I knew some of the people on the city council and I was unhappy with them, but I didn't know the new guys and gals. So I waited until I was really unhappy and then voted against people instead of for someone. Neither party appealed to me that much. I just voted for the person - only I didn't know whom I was voting for most of the time. I paid attention to the Presidential elections. I listened to the news. Maybe I listened to a couple of speeches early on to see what the person was about. After that it is all spin based on polls anyway I figured. Then I voted for the lesser evil. Sound familiar?

Well if I am going to tell people how to be citizens I had better do better myself. What are citizens supposed to do anyway? I didn't know so I went to find out. Lo and behold, no one else did either. Everyone had some idea, voting, picking up trash, volunteering, stuff like that. But where was the definition? I looked everywhere and only found a bunch of organizations that help new immigrants pass the test to become citizens. So I took the test. Good test. Good U. S. History and U. S. government. Reminded me of my civics course in high school where we learned about the Constitution and the Bill of Rights and how to pass a bill in the Congress. Then we took a test, got a grade and forgot about it. It was in history class I think. The "citizenship" grade on our report card was not about this. It was about whether we were a good kid or not. I flunked once.

So I set out to find out what you & I, the citizens, were really supposed to do. Easy huh? Wrong. I couldn't find a single definition for citizenship other than the normal ones of what country you belong to. None that said here is where the citizen sits in the scheme of things and here is their job description. Well that got me. I am the type of guy that if you tell me something just is, so don't ask and don't worry about it, I am unhappy. I want to know why. And I won't stop looking until I find out. It is my strength and weakness at the same time. So after a few trips to the library and asking my friends I found out this was a problem. People did not know what they were supposed to do because no one had told them what to do. There is no definition of citizen in the Constitution. The dictionary one is weak.

So I went to Philadelphia and Washington, and Boston and Williamsburg, etc. to see if anyone there knew. No they didn't. But they had some people who lived there before who did. People like Thomas Jefferson and Benjamin Franklin and George Washington and James Madison and John Adams. The people who wrote our Constitution had a very clear idea of what a citizen should be. The citizens need to be virtuous and informed according to the Founders. They said it again and again. Why they didn't put it into the Constitution I don't know, but there it was. Simple, easy and wise. The citizens of this country are the boss. They are supposed act like free upright people. They are supposed to know what is going on. And to have the heart and good sense to elect the right people to represent them. People who would put God, country, and community first, the people second and themselves third.

Super, I can go give my speeches now. Have a nice retirement. I joined the National Speakers Assn. and started out. Joined a Monday Night Football session too where we bet a few dimes on every possible thing that could happen in the game. I was

confident. My life was set. It was going to be easy money. Wrong again. People kept saying they needed some sort of organization. They said they needed some sort of training. I said what did you learn in school? The answer was nothing. It was about then that I learned that 32 States didn't teach civics and/or citizenship. They had put a lot of soft subjects into the curriculum after Vietnam and History, Civics and Geography were the losers. That's why Jay Leno has such an easy time finding subjects for his show. Most Americans don't know about their country. Strange how people forget and don't learn from history. I learned in my studies that the reason for the public schools in the first place is to teach a central version of citizenship. Before the public school the USA had all private, mostly religious, schools and the result was the nation was fragmenting. So the Founders later in life worked to create a public school system. So here is the reason for their existence and they threw it out. So back to the drawing board and design a training program.

So I designed a training program for adults that can go on any street USA and started to show it off. It was a hit. Only one problem. Americans, it turns out, like to win too much. They fought over every little thing. Then when they came to agreement on the big issues they would start to argue about the details. As a result they never did their job. So I put some civility skills in there to let them keep order by themselves. After all these are the rulers of their country. They should be able to govern themselves. That worked. I call them Citizenship Skills. I got them from the Preamble to the Constitution. They are at Appendix 1. It was perfect. Right in tune with what the Founders wanted. This little group process produces an informed virtuous citizen.

Then my Dad died and that put everything on hold for about five years. I dabbled with it in the meanwhile and even competed for an Army contract for a citizenship program for their High School

ROTC Program. I won. I was amazed. I had been competing against some major publishing houses. That's when I knew I had something.

Right after that a funny thing happened. I was drinking my coffee one morning and looking out the window. Then I decided to open my e-mail. There was a message from a guy named Sergei Stafeev. I figured he was selling insurance or something so I was about to dump it. Then I noticed it came from the web site so I opened. It said, "Hello I represent the Non- Governmental Organizations of Northwest Russia". You could have knocked me over with a feather. Russia? I had spent my whole life defending against them. Now they wanted my help? Too much! Well to make a long story short I went over there and found that they were just like we were in the 1800s. They had a democracy but had no idea how to make it work. Oh sure they had a constitution but so what. What did it mean anyway? How does the system really work? They had listened to and tried our government's idea of democracy and said it didn't work. So they were shopping around for new ideas for teaching democracy. As one Professor said, "We have tried your government's idea of democracy. Our analysis shows that it will just trade one elite for another. We have had enough of that. We want to be a government of, by, and for the people. Can you help us?"

After testing out the little program they decided this was just what they needed. So they put me on this Russian train and sent me to this little province north of St. Petersburg to develop a Russian version. It has been like being a kid in a candy store. These people are hungry for democracy. They have developed a whole set of models to train their whole people. Not in how to pass a bill in the Duma. But how to think and act like a free person. How to elect good representatives. How to be a partner with their government. These models are for all schools, all organizations,

and everyone from 6-60. They are fantastic. They will be a great democracy.

So that's the story of a little idea that could. It just keeps on growing. Now it is ready to go again in the USA. That is, if you will join in. The rest of this little book will tell you how you can make this country of, by, and for the people again.

4. WHY SHOULD YOU CARE?

"A Republic – if you can keep it" *Benjamin Franklin*

One time in my life I was a chairman of an international organization. It didn't do much but there were a lot of important people in it. By some stroke of luck I was elected to be the chairman. I went about it in typical American fashion. We wheeled and dealt and got a huge amount done because we did not sweat the small stuff. But one day I went too far. I was proposing we do something that would require the Europeans and Canadians to get some kind of approval from their governments so the discussion stopped. I had to quickly adjourn for lunch to avoid an embarrassment. After lunch, my British delegation chief came to my table and asked to sit down. He was a very distinguished gentleman who was a peer in England and vice-president of a multi-million dollar firm. He said in his best perfect English, "I say, you think we are like you, don't you?" He meant, did I think the European democracies were like the USA. I said, "Yes". He said, "Well we're not"! Then he sat down and proceeded to tell me how almost every European country had laws that in effect left the government as the center of power in that country and not the people. At the end of his thorough 1 hour lesson, he said, "Just remember, if you (the USA) fail, democracy fails". Think about that. He is saying that if you and I don't do our jobs and make this experiment work, democracy will fail all over the world. Freedom

will be extinguished. This from a British Lord. It is a sobering thought. If you don't learn the lessons of this book and take them to heart and ACT on them, it will.

The fact is gang the USA, warts and all, (which are all fixable if you will work at it) really is the "shining city on a hill". Call it a small hill if you like, but the USA is an example for all other nations. It is still an experiment though. They are all watching to see if it works before they try it for real. You the people are the key to the whole thing - the whole world - a new better life for all people lies ahead if you can do it - if you can rule yourselves successfully. Can you live up to the faith the Founders had in you? Time will tell.

QUOTES FROM ROME JUST BEFORE THE FALL OF THE REPUBLIC

"The people have become demoralized and more than ever inclined to sell their hands, votes, and voices to the highest bidder."

Anon

"Politicians put the people to sleep by amusing them with games and shows."

Anon

"Giving people free food robs them of their will power. The belly has no ears"

Cato

"The Army is no longer of the people, and owes its allegiance to the state."

Anon

Anything familiar there?

How about this:

The average age of the world's greatest democratic nations has been 200 years.

Each has been through the following sequence:

From bondage to spiritual faith.

From faith to great courage.

From courage to liberty.

From liberty to abundance.

From abundance to complacency.

From complacency to selfishness.

From selfishness to apathy.

From apathy to dependency.

And from dependency back again into bondage.”

Thomas MacCauley, British Historian

Can we escape this fate?

Where do you think we are we in the cycle?

Are we going up or down?

If we are going down the tubes, who can stop it? The boss, that's who - and that's YOU!

The fact is that ruling ourselves is just part of growing up as humans. It is natural but scary, just like when you were a teenager. Humans are just like teenagers at this stage in our development - rebellious, conflicted, confused but acting like we know the whole story and we don't need any parents to tell us what to do. But do we? Sure we do, just like your teenager does.

So who are our parents? GOD, our ancestors (history), and wise people among us who are not in the teenage trap, there are many ways to figure out what we are doing wrong and many sources to tell us how to do it right. We/you just have to ask.

One source of both history and GOD is the Bible. There is a great story in the Bible in 1st Samuel where the Israelites decided to give up their republic. They ask Samuel to ask GOD for a king since they had decided that their representatives were too corrupt and they wanted a king to clean things up. Samuel asked GOD and GOD said, in no uncertain terms, that this king thing was a bad idea. I am no biblical scholar but it has to be one of the longest quotes from God in the Bible.

God said, "This will be the manner of the king who shall reign over you: He will take your sons and appoint them for himself, for his chariots and to be his horsemen; and some shall run before his chariots.

And he will appoint him captains over thousands and captains over fifties, and will set them to till his ground and to reap his harvest, and to make his instruments of war and instruments of his chariots.

And he will take your daughters to be confectioners and to be cooks and to be bakers.

And he will take your fields and your vineyards and your olive yards, even the best of them, and give them to his servants.

And he will take a tenth of your seed and of your vineyards, and give to his officers and to his servants.

And he will take your menservants, and your maidservants, and your goodliest young men, and your asses, and put them to his work.

He will take a tenth of your sheep; and ye shall be his servants.

And ye shall cry out on that day because of your king which ye shall have chosen you; and the LORD will not hear you in that day."

Bible, I Samuel 8

Pretty heavy stuff isn't it and pretty clear, so did they listen? Nah, they decided to go ahead anyway. GOD then tells Samuel to let them have a king but not to feel too bad about it. After all, GOD said, in taking a king they are not rejecting you, they are rejecting ME! When we allow some human to be our absolute boss we reject GOD. Think about it. How many humans do you let be your king in different areas? How about your representatives, do you let them boss you around? Probably not, most Americans don't do that. But what they do do is demand that their politicians give them lots of goodies. And as long as the politicians do this, people keep electing them. And as long as they keep the goodies coming people let their politicians do whatever else they want. They shirk their responsibility to watch their representatives and see if they are doing it right. Let's see here, "from selfishness to apathy", and then where? - back into bondage, how about that. We will talk more about that in the chapter on power and how it can corrupt even the best of us. Stay tuned.

It seems we are all Israelites, shirking our responsibilities to our GOD and ourselves - that is to make a better world. That doesn't mean we can't have the good times. That doesn't mean we should be poor and pray all day long. But if we don't work at making a better world, the reality is that it will get worse. Then we there will be no more good times and we will be praying regularly to be free

of the masters we ourselves have allowed to rule us. That is the situation that the USA was designed to reverse, the few ruling the many. That is why you the PEOPLE are above the government and right under GOD. That is how it is supposed to work. You are supposed to pick people of good character and capability to represent you in our government, but the responsibility for their actions is ultimately yours. You the PEOPLE are your own boss under GOD and are responsible for all that happens or doesn't happen. You have to take that seriously and work at it if you want it to continue.

After all, how can you have a government of, by, and for the people without the people? If you the people stop caring there are always those who will sneak in while you are not looking and start to use YOUR power to help themselves. When they get it, they will then use it to keep it. That is called domination. That is what you get if you don't listen to what this book says and start to ACT on it – DO it. Don't just think about it or almost all will all be slaves again in a few years. History shows that this can happen overnight. The Roman Senate gave power to Caesar to solve a crisis and he promised to give it back when it was over. He didn't. That led to 500 years of domination and degradation followed by another almost 1000 years of darkness and further degradation of people. Do you want to put yourselves and your children, the world and their children, through that? Could you be dominated by a small group of committed people aided by computers and modern spy techniques? Yes, you could, and those people live in your community. I bet you could name a couple. Do you know anyone who would be glad to rule you if you let them? DON'T LET THEM! You have the power to rule yourselves, but it takes some care and some work. If you don't do that work, someone else will do it for you and eventually rule you. That's the end of democracy. That's the end of government of, by, and for the people.

5. WHY GOVERNMENT?

"If Men were Angels, no government would be necessary"
James Madison, Federalist #51

That's a good question. Why can't people just govern ourselves? Why are humans so bad they have to create something to force them to be at least moderately good? Why does there have to be a power source set up to protect us from ourselves? Why can't we all get along Rodney King said? Well that is a bigger and more important subject that will have to wait for someone wiser to answer. In the meanwhile here we are, a bunch of very weak and imperfect beings who have invented the concept of government to cover up our weaknesses.

Not society mind you. Society is a natural thing. Don't confuse society with government. Society is a natural thing, a good thing. It happens because of our wants and the fact that everyone is different. So people do different things for the good of themselves and the whole group. It encourages us to work together to make things better for ourselves. Some people are doctors. Some people are poets. All contribute to the whole.

Government is different. It is there to punish us. Government is a necessary evil designed to force us to keep our bad sides to a minimum. It is here to restrain us from doing bad things to each other. As Madison said, if everyone was good no government would be necessary.

You need to understand that. Many people confuse government with society. That is a dangerous thing to do. The problem is that government is not good. It is, as George Washington said, "a

force, like fire, a troublesome servant and a fearsome master". He went on to say you must watch it all the time if you want to remain free. Do you? You should! We will talk about that later.

6. WHY DEMOCRACY?

"Democracy is the worst form of government unless you compare it to all the rest." *Winston Churchill*

The father of all modern political theory is Aristotle, that old Greek. He wrote a great book called 'Politics' that is must reading if you really want to study the subject. He said there are really only three forms of government. All three forms of government have a good side and a bad side depending on the intent of the people running them.

The first is a kingdom. If it is a good king he or she is called a philosopher king, and it is a wonderful form of government. The bad side is called tyranny or dictatorship, and it is an awful type of government. If there could only be even a 50 -50 split between the good rulers and the bad rulers it might be the best way to go. Unfortunately that has not been the case historically. Quite the opposite, it seems. The fact is there have been very very few good kings and queens, a few average ones, and a whole lot of bad ones. So while the concept seems good, human experience shows it is a dangerous way to go with disastrous results for most people. While things get done in a hurry and pretty efficiently with one person in charge, most people probably will not like what gets done. See Chapter 9 about the problems of power and how it corrupts.

The next is what he called aristocracy. This is the rule of the many by a few. Again in its good side it is a pretty good compromise as long as the rulers cooperate and work at least 50% of the time for

the good of the whole and not just themselves. Trouble is, again, experience shows they tend not to do that and back it goes - to bad things happening to good people. In the bad form it is called oligarchy. Ditto previous about Chapter 9.

The next is constitutional government where people pick the rulers and all are governed by a set of laws, including the rulers. The flip side of this he calls, surprise, democracy. Aristotle and our Founders had no use for democracy, which they considered to be disorderly and unfit as a form of government at anything above a tribal level. It is not even mentioned in the Constitution. Nevertheless, the name has come to be connected to what Aristotle would call constitutional government. In that form it is, as he says, the slowest and most cumbersome form of government but by far the safest and best for the common people. Chapter 9 can cause problems here too. It may be the safest but it is not perfect. That is why the Founders chose it.

So democracy, as it is known now, is more than a form of government. It is a way of life. A way in which people are partners with each other and their government and the system of domination gives way to a system of patience and cooperation on the road to finding the common good. Everyone has to be a part for it to work. Everyone has to work at it. Everyone has to do his or her job as citizen. If You the PEOPLE don't pull your weight, democracy can and will go away. If you are an American I guarantee you won't like the way of life that replaces it.

What our Founders really did was to try to replace the dominator model of human government with a partnership model. As George Washington said, "I rejoice ... that mankind will reverse the absurd position that the many were made for the few." They did it deliberately. In their day and from sometime way back in history the winners of the last battle became the ruler. Power was all that

counted. Reason was a distant second. Citizen's rights did not exist.

Over the years this became normal. People expected it. The dominated were just as much at fault as the dominators. Where you were born and who you were born to basically determined your life. If you were born poor you did what you were told, period. As one of the Founders said, "Life in our day was rude, brutish, and short". That is how life was for common people. People expected it.

The USA idea that all are created equal is a radical idea in human history. Those who would dominate hate it and try to kill it. That is why they had to fight a revolution to create our radical nation, a complete departure from previous human history. And once they had done that they had to create a new type of government to make their idea work. A government that gets people to change and run themselves rather than be run by whomever was most powerful. A government where the leaders are servants of the people. Democracy is a way to operate as a partnership of equals. Ours is quite different from the old attempts back in Greece and Rome. Our Founders tried very hard to eliminate the mistakes that had caused those old democracies/republics to fail. They gave us a strong economy to build us up so the kings and queens could not conquer us. In fact the danger most of the Founders worried about was you the people. They worried that the people would beat themselves in time because they got fat, dumb, and happy and stopped caring. (Remember the 200 year cycle in Chap 3?) That had happened in previous democracies too, but they couldn't fix that. Only You, the PEOPLE could and can. How are you doing? Working hard at it or hardly working? To survive, this new idea in government needs constant and regular care by it's people. After all, how can you have a government of, by, and for the people without the people? If you the people stop caring there are always

those who will sneak in while you are not looking and start to use YOUR power to help themselves. When they get it, they will then use it to keep it. That is called domination.

Democracy was invented to give us a way to avoid this, and it requires your help. As I said before you can't have a government of, by, and for the people without the people. A democracy is all about the people. They are the main beneficiaries of democracy. A democratic people must learn how democracy works, learn their place, their job, in it, train themselves to do their job, and DO IT. Otherwise it will not be democracy. It will soon be aristocracy and later maybe even dictatorship. Democracy is slower and safer than other forms of government and offers much more hope of world peace. But the people must care and understand it and do their part for it to work.

7. A SHORT HISTORY OF DEMOCRACY

"All previous democracies have committed suicide."

John Adams

It is a long history if you look at all the democracies and republics there have been. It is a short one if you look at how long they have lasted. That's the rub. That's what Franklin was talking about. That's what Adams talked about. That's what Jefferson talked about. Washington put it positively but said the same thing. It is up to YOU, the American people, to keep this thing. Not your representatives. Not your uncle or your aunt. Not we the people, that nice group next door. It's YOU. You're IT!!!

The whole king thing started maybe in Egypt when an elected president or king or whatever he or she was called declared themselves Pharaoh and later decided their kids were better than

everyone else's and so this family should rule forever. It went downhill from there.

The fact is that no government is good government. Remember Madison, "If men were angels no government would be necessary"? Unfortunately, none of us are. Well maybe a few but only now and then. And as I will tell you a later even if you elect one of these angels, he or she is likely to get the "Big Head" once they get there. Don't kid yourself. If this democracy is to last, it is up to YOU to make it work. It is up to YOU to do your job. The Founders gave you the least worst government. But it is nowhere near perfect. You have to make it work. And since you are the boss it is up to you to hire the help, guide them, give them goals and suggest solutions to them, and fire them when they don't do their job.

A short note here so I don't get in trouble with all the teachers out there. This country is not a democracy, technically. It is a democratic republic. A democracy is where everyone votes on everything. That's the one Aristotle didn't like. It allows emotion to rule and ends up in chaos. The closest thing to it is in some small towns which are not much more than large tribes knitted together by location rather than blood. They are the closest thing you and I know to real democracy. A democratic republic is where you elect representatives to vote for you. Our country is a democratic republic. A girl I was talking to once asked me what a republic is. She was a senior in high school taking advanced placement Civics. So don't get holier than thou all you teachers out there. Get to work. You obviously have a big job ahead of you.

Democracy has been tried many times in history. Greece, Rome, all over Europe, a short stint even in China. There were even some American Indian republics. None of them lasted. The average has

been about 200 years. Let's see. How old is the USA now? 230+? Maybe you & I ought to think about that.

The problem was always in some way, the people. You can't have democracy without the people. I say again, you can't have a nation of, by, and for the people without the people. They are the key. They are the one's who benefit. A small rich group would be happy with a kingdom. After all aren't the few supposed to boss the many? (Who the heck thought that one up?) The problem is that is what usually happens. Then, after much grief, the people revolt and form a democracy. Then about 200 years or so later they fall asleep at the switch and let it die.

It takes work. It takes effort - continued effort - not just a protest or two now and then. If You the PEOPLE don't do your job, guess what? Someone else will do it for you. Then they become the rulers and you go back to slavery - or whatever it will be called the next time. That's history people. That is the long and the short of it. If you want freedom you have to work at it. There is always some ambitious group of people out there ready to job you. You may know of some right now, right there, where you live. You are right. It is human nature. If you let them, they will take over. And if it isn't these people now it will be others later. You have to keep on working. Democracy is never "over".

That's the problem. People think, "well after 200 years the USA has seen it all and the country is still here, so it will get through this too". That's what the Romans thought too. They were wrong. They lost what was the world's greatest republic at that time. The Ceasar types said, "I will fix things for you". Just give me all the power and I will fix things and then give it back. The Roman Senate did that. They gave away the Roman people's power that they had been trusted with. Do you think they asked the people if that was OK? Later the big head took over and it was "ha ha, the

jokes on you”, and an empire was born. It can and will happen again if you don’t do your job. Be aware of what your representatives are doing when there is not a crisis as well. Madison said that the greater danger was from slow little steps allowing more and more government control sold to the people by well meaning people in the name of safety and security.

Don’t think WE will do it. If YOU don’t do it, it won’t get done. If YOU can all get that idea, you & I will be safe. If YOU don’t, the country, as you know it, will be gone in a hundred years or so, maybe sooner. That’s the way it works. And it’s sneaky. Maybe there will be crisis where the Congress will give a President some extra powers. Then after the crisis he or she doesn’t give it back. Then later people elect another President who uses it against us. That’s how it happened before. It usually sneaks up on you.

Then when you see it, it is too late. Because once the power is gone from you it is gone. There are no second chances in this game. Remember, those who have power will use it to keep it. You have the power right now in this country. You need to use it to keep it. I know you & I give it to others to use for us. They are called representatives. That’s great as long as you remember it is YOUR power they are using.

Remember the McDonalds? Say you owned it and only went there every two years. Do you suppose this manager is going to be loyal to you? Do you suppose he or she will hook up their friends at your expense? And when you don’t care? Well I suppose they will hook them up again. Pretty soon there goes the profit. After a while you’re out of business and big time out of cash. The manager walks away free as a bird with your money in his or her pocket. You are left holding the bag.

A word about community service. A lot of people confuse that with being a good citizen. It is not. It is a wonderful thing that develops many good human traits, but it is what it is, service. As a citizen you are not a servant here. You are the boss. That requires a whole other type of thinking and action, which we will talk about in Chapter 10. Don't confuse community service with citizenship. They are not the same. In fact some of my more cynical friends call community service, "Velvet bread and circuses". They think the elite do this specifically to keep the people thinking they are good citizens which keeps them from doing what they should do as citizens – watch that elite group and control it.

The bottom line is, if you want this country to work for you - then you had better work at it and for it.

That's the short history of democracy.

8. THE SHORT HISTORY OF THE USA

"America did not invent human rights, human rights invented America."
Jimmy Carter

Well along comes the USA. A few wise men got together and, backed by wise women, made this country.

Women by the way were and are key. In a government where the few rule the many, domination is the name of the game. Power rules. The strong get the goodies. When that happens, it is women who get the short end of the stick. They were big supporters of democracy. Like everything else it could not have been and cannot be done without them.

The key to the USA is that it is based on ideals. This is important. The founding document of this country is NOT the Constitution. It is the Declaration of Independence. That's where the American People declared themselves to be free from the domination form of government. These ideals are a lighthouse for you to look to when you get a little lost.

I found out how key these ideals are and how universal they are one time in Russia. I was trying to explain the way democracy works and what skills the people have to have to make it work. I used the word "individuality" in my presentation about the skills needed by the people in a democracy. My interpreter stopped in mid-sentence. She said, "There is a word in Russian that they use for that, but it means nothing like what you are trying to say. There is no such thing as individuality here in the sense you mean it. You will have to explain it." I was stumped. How do you explain so basic a concept of individuality?

I thrashed around in my mind while 200+ people, students, teachers, and administrators from a foreign country listened for an answer. These people had never known any other idea of life other than to be a cog in a wheel, a wheel they had no control over. A wheel based on pure power that pretended to serve certain communist ideals, but in reality was the same old dictatorship they had had for centuries. How do I explain this to people who have no clue what it is? There is no word for it in their language. Then it just popped into my head. I would recite the preamble to the Declaration of Independence, and then explain it in detail. That would allow me to show them the ideals, including the concept of individuality, and see if they liked them. After all they are the basic philosophic building blocks of all modern democracy. So I recited the words, and as they were translated into Russian the whole audience started to sit up in their chairs. You could hear the movements, the feet shuffling, the chairs barely creaking. They all

started to lean forward. You could have heard a pin drop. You could feel the electricity in the room. It was amazing. Those two hundred year old words were speaking to these people just as they have spoken to millions before. If I didn't know before that our nation is built on universal truths I did then, and I do now.

Let's go over them again for ourselves. See what you sense when you read them. Forget your ideas about where the country is now and just focus on the original words and ideas. Feel them, think about them, try to understand them as they were written, try to remember and understand why they were written.

"WE hold these Truths to be self-evident, that all Men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the Pursuit of Happiness – That to secure these Rights, Governments are instituted among Men, deriving their just Powers from the Consent of the Governed, that whenever any Form of Government becomes destructive of these Ends, it is the Right of the People to alter or to abolish it, and to institute new Government, laying its Foundation on such Principles, and organizing its Powers in such Form, as to them shall seem most likely to effect their Safety and Happiness."

John Adams
Benjamin Franklin
Thomas Jefferson 1776

Wow! What powerful words. You could see these words build a dream in these people's minds. How did you do? Did you dream just then of a great country that can change the world and help humanity? I bet many of you did because that is what your country is about. It is about a dream. A dream of all humanity. All people love to hear these words because they are the dream of all

humanity. A dream that all can live together in relative peace and be free to accomplish their own dreams without being forced to follow someone else's.

Let's look at these words a little bit more closely.

WE hold these Truths to be self-evident

That is, not subject to human whim, not changeable by humans or any institution they might create.

that all Men are created equal

That is equal in the beginning. But humans (men was used as a generalization then) have fallen far from their original state and are not equal now.

that they are endowed by their Creator

That you and all of us are creatures of a higher being, God, who is then the ultimate ruler of the nation through You the PEOPLE. You & I were all put here by a Creator for the purpose of seeking that equality again - by your and my own choice.

with certain unalienable Rights

That certain rights have been given to you by God that likewise are not subject to change by humans or their institutions.

that among these are

There are more than just these. These are the basic ones.

Life

You have the right to the life you came to lead.

Liberty

You have the right to pursue that life of your own free choice without interference from your government.

and the Pursuit of Happiness

And in the way you choose as long as it does not cause harm to others or interfere with their same rights.

That to secure these Rights, Governments are instituted among Men

The purpose of any government is to ensure the people's rights.

deriving their just Powers from the Consent of the Governed

These governments must have your approval and only have such powers as they are given by You the PEOPLE.

that whenever any Form of Government becomes destructive of these Ends, it is the Right of the People to alter or to abolish it,

Since You the PEOPLE are the boss, ideally under God's guidance, you have the right to change your government and its powers if you wish.

and to institute new Government,

You can change the current one or start a new one if you wish.

laying its Foundation on such Principles, and organizing its Powers in such Form, as to them shall seem most likely to effect their Safety and Happiness.

You should make sure that any government you form should ensure your safety and your rights while allowing you to pursue your lives as you see fit.

It was the first of many basic concepts that I would have to explain. I have learned through experience and seeing it for myself that this is pretty much the only country that has all of these basic concepts built in to our government and way of life. It is not just the Constitution and the Declaration after all. It is your internal conviction that it is what it is that makes it all work. You expect this way of life that others only dream of. This country, warts and all, is indeed the shining city on the hill. If you don't like the way it looks, then let's talk about changing it. Don't just grouse and gripe, try to get your fellow rulers to see it your way. Remember convince, not coerce or force your fellow rulers. They are all equal and have the same rights as you do regardless of how they look and seem to you.

This country is about a whole new way of looking at the world - a world where all are important and all are given the chance to better themselves. Where everyone works to make themselves better and their world better. Where you choose your own governments to work for you. Where you work to make a world where reason and reflection rule, rather than force and whim.

Like it or not, you & I are the hope of the world. Your actions will affect all of human history. Remember the British Peer - "if you fail, democracy dies with you". A sobering thought. You the PEOPLE of the United States carry the hope of the world on your shoulders. If you don't believe it, ask an immigrant.

You should take your responsibility seriously. This nation was and is truly a world revolution. And you are the key piece. You are the key beneficiaries. You are what it is all about, you, the people. And if those people before you did not care it would not be here. Think about it. What if Thomas Jefferson and those guys wrote and spoke those wonderful words and no one picked up the rifle and backed them up? You too need to pick up the cause if it is to succeed. You are the beneficiaries of this form of government. If you don't make it work, who will? You the PEOPLE have a great responsibility to yourselves, your children, and history to make this dream a reality. Start to see yourselves that way and see what a difference it makes in your lives.

Jimmy Carter once said, "America didn't invent human rights, human rights invented America." He is right. The Founders regenerated this dream of all people in 1776. Many people spilled lots of blood over the years to keep it alive. It is not just a USA dream; it is the world's dream. It is up to you and I to not only keep it going, but to hold it up so others can see it. You & I need to hold this truth high. The Founders trusted that YOU could change the world and make it safe for democracy. You will tell history whether they were right or wrong.

The American People have spent the last 200+ years trying to live up to and make this dream come true. The country still has a way to go if all the grousing about it is to be believed. See Chapter 11, A Suggested Approach, for ways you can help bring this about in your life and community.

9. THE U. S. CONSTITUTION

“The existence of fundamental rights and the proper conduct of government ultimately depends on inner conviction - not a constitution”
-Thomas Jefferson

There is a lot of stuff written about our constitution. It has become as much a myth as a document. That is good in a way because it truly is the wisest, best, governing document in the world and I will argue that point with anyone who is knowledgeable enough to do so.

However, please remember that the Declaration is the foundation. It holds the promise, the idea, and ideal of America. It is the guiding document. The Constitution just tries to put a system in place that will achieve that promise. Don't confuse the system with the reason for it.

That is not to say that you should not study the Constitution. It sets up a brilliant system that uses human nature against itself to achieve a balance. This allows us to avoid having a few people in charge to boss everyone else around. The system that the Constitution sets up itself forces a balance in the society and keeps us in check. That perhaps is the most important thing to know about the Constitution. It is about controlling human nature more than it is about government. That is why it is just as current as if it was written yesterday. Our government may have changed, our ways may have changed, but basic human nature has not changed. It has not changed in the 4000 odd years of history that people have been able to discover. That is why our experimental government is so important. So far in history only humans have been able to control their baser nature by putting one (or a few) person (people) in charge of the rest to force everyone to be “good”. Trouble is, most of them became corrupted by their power owing to that same human nature. That in turn has lead us mostly to war and destruction. The American Dream is to end this practice, to be able

to govern ourselves using reason and reflection. The goal is to build a civilization where all can follow their own paths back to their Creator with only minimum and necessary interference from the government that they themselves set up and watch over. The Constitution sets up a system that uses our own natures against ourselves to allow this to happen. That is its brilliance. That is why it is current to this day.

The Constitution, brilliant though it is, though should not be the focus of our civic education efforts for the majority of citizens. That should be how to work together in your local communities to come to agreement on the common good and how to elect and keep good representatives. This is your real job. The three keys to knowing if you are doing it well are:

1. If the people on Elm St. in your town can learn how to take down the old elm tree there without breaking up the fabric of the community.
2. If you are able to consistently elect people based on character and capability to run your town.
3. If you elect the best of these to higher office and watch them to make sure they remain grounded and unselfish.

The lawyers and other Constitution buffs will continue to have a field day with the Constitution, as they should. Luckily it is so brilliant that it continues to defy their efforts to mess it up. What is that old saying, "God looks after fools, drunks, and the United States of America"? Please pray that God continues to do that and help as much as you can by doing your jobs as citizens.

Just to save you time and help you do your job, here are a few things you should know and remember about the Constitution:

1. It is about human nature, not government. That is why it is as good today as when it was written.
2. It is deliberately simple and general. That is so you can read and understand it. Please do that. Plus it makes it flexible enough to bend with time while not breaking.
3. It is much more than a legal document. You must understand the spirit in which it was written to use it well. This Constitution sets up a great experiment in human government. You are part of that experiment. It is brilliant, but will work much better if you work with it and with your fellow citizens. It will be a huge step forward for humanity if it can be made to work right. Do your job knowing that all future humanity is depending on you.
4. It requires you to be able to compromise and harmonize your differences to come to reasonable decisions for the common good. At the local level you do this directly in concert with people you know whom you elected to serve you. At the higher levels you pick people who have worked well at the local level and let them make it work at the higher level.
5. The Congress is the greater among equals. They are supposed to set domestic policy and the President carries it out. They are responsible for your economy and your commerce, and your transportation, etc, not the President. By the way, they do make laws so it makes sense that you should elect some lawyers to Congress. But should all representatives be lawyers?
6. We put way too much faith and responsibility on the President. The President is not the ruler. You are through the Congress. The Congress is the greater among equals. They are like a board of directors setting policy and direction for the country. The President

is only supposed to go in that direction and make those policies work. He/She is, however, responsible for the military and foreign policy. So you should try to elect Presidents who are good in these areas. It was OK to elect anyone when the USA was a small and isolated nation, but now it is a world leader. Try to elect good world leaders as President.

7. Judges should be independent in order to be a good check and balance on the legislature and protect minority rights. However there is a fine line between interpreting law and making law. They are NOT supposed to make law.

8. The Constitution separates religion and state, not God and state. The specific clause that does this says, "... no religious Test shall ever be required as a Qualification to any Office or public Trust under the United States" It was put there to prevent the establishment, official or not, of a state religion. These had proved to be big problems in the past. If you read the Declaration, God is very much there. It seems clear that the Founders meant for God to rule this country through his people, its citizens, regardless of their religion. If there is only one God, there are only one people. The United States exists to unite people not separate them.

9. The Constitution gives you a number of extremely valuable rights that you should defend and keep. Just remember that for every right there is a responsibility. Democracy is about growing up. Growing up is about being responsible for yourself. When you get your own place for the first time you find it is really great. But you also find that you are then responsible for keeping it clean. When you get freedom of speech, religion, whatever, it is the same thing (See Chap 10).

That does not mean you should not read and be familiar with your Constitution. It is deliberately short so you can do that. But, if you

want to do that, first get the principles of the Declaration firm in your mind. It is the founding document. The Constitution seeks to put it into effect. Then see in general how the Constitution works and why.

This is what you need to do as citizens, because as Jefferson says it is this inner conviction, mythical or not, that really counts in the long run. Try to separate the myth from the truth. As I said earlier I was amazed when I found out the truth about our country instead of the myths I was taught. The truth is much better.

There are lots of books you can get in your library that do this very well. Many new books have recently been written that tell this truth. I have a little list of some that have been helpful to me in the back of this book just as some suggestions for you. It is by no means complete. There have been hundreds of books written about the Constitution. Most of them are very good. Read as many as you wish. The story of our country and why and how it was formed is fascinating. As I said the truth is much better than the myth. So read all about your country and your constitution in any book you want to your hearts content.

For those who do wish to do some serious study about the Constitution, I recommend a book called "The Federalist Papers". This book along with Aristotle's "Politics" contains the philosophic and scientific basis of the American form of democracy, which is still quite different from most other forms of democracy found in the world. In it the Founders themselves outline exactly why they did what they did. They wrote it to explain to the American people of the day why they should vote for this Constitution. Since this Constitution has changed very little it is still valid. It is not easy reading because these men were highly educated and had to write to communicate. There were no telephones so they had to write many letters a day. Their writing is very good, but very complex by

modern standards. Nonetheless, in my view, it should be required in every college and university political science course in the world that wants to teach about the American form of modern democracy. To those who feel so inclined, I say, "go for it".

The other biggest thing about the Constitution you should know is that you have job called citizen. It is the highest and most important job under the Constitution. You should learn to do it well and do it regularly.

10. THE POWER PROBLEM

"The essence of government is power, and power, lodged as it must be in human hands, will ever be liable to abuse."

James Madison

The USA is based on one main concept. The concept is that centralized power is bad. It's not the power mind you. That just gets things done. It is the people with power that are the problem. The USA is designed to solve this ancient problem.

Throughout the Constitution, there is that one central theme. Try and control human nature. Limit power wherever you find it so people can't use it without limit. Share it. Separate it. Limit how long people can have it. Anything but allow anyone to get a firm grip on it without anyone else there to check on them. The Founders were determined to solve this power problem any way they could. It is the basic problem of government. How do you get people to lead others and not get the "big head"? How do you get them to use the power given to them for the good of the whole without getting caught up in it personally? How do you keep them from using your money for themselves that they said they were going to spend for something good for everyone? How do you

keep them from using the power you gave them to use for the common good to keep it for themselves? How do you keep them from using the money you gave them to con you into leaving them in power?

Power it seems does funny things to people. John Adams thought it caused a mental condition in people. He may be right in many cases.

The bottom line is that you must look for it in your representatives. Not just the ones you are electing but the ones you already elected. That is a big part of your job. If it is true that people in power become the victim of a mental condition in many cases, you must make sure it doesn't happen to your representative.

Here's what to look for. Here is how the problem develops.

Fear and Insecurity - When a person first gets power they feel uncomfortable and even fearful. Nothing in their life has made them ready for this. In most cases there is no book to tell them what to do. They are in strange waters.

Defensiveness - People can't stand to feel uncomfortable or fearful for any length of time. So their mind makes up reasons why this power thing is OK. Like, "well I must be meant to do this", or "well I must really be better than other people".

Self Importance - This leads to feelings of self-importance. "Wow I am a big person. I am better than I thought. Everyone tells me so." "GOD must have ordained me to do this. It is my destiny." This type of thinking develops naturally in many people. It allows the person to forget the fear even more. The head starts to swell.

Self-entitlement - Here they start to forget that all are created equal. Their superiority complex starts to become a habit. Certainly they start to forget that all are equal citizens. Here the big head is most recognizable. They start to believe that they deserve things. It starts out in real world situations where they say something like, "I travel so much I need to go first class to be at the top of my game when I get where I am going." That then leads to taking other "perks" - which are happily handed out by people who want the representatives favor later on. Pretty soon human nature takes over and they think they are entitled to all these "bennies" that the normal person doesn't have.

Disconnectedness - They start to get lost in their own little world they and their kissers and rich and powerful interests create for them. They forget what other average people are going through. They forget that being a public servant is supposed to be exactly that. It should be a worthy sacrifice to be an elected representative. The real world eventually completely leaves their minds except as something they have to fake talking about at election time. Here they start to get beyond the big head. They become almost completely self-centered.

Power Thirstiness - At this point power becomes the thing. They are convinced now in their mind they are worthy of it. They are convinced they are better than others. So they should have the power to rule, right? - only makes sense. Remember those who have power will use it to keep it. Eventually you will see signs of this - IF YOU LOOK FOR IT. They will be actively working to consolidate and keep their power you have given them - but for its own sake.

Arrogance - This leads to haughtiness and arrogance. You should all be able to recognize these. Even if they are able to hide it most

of the time, they start using the power you gave them for themselves. Look for signs of selfish gain in their actions.

Cruelty - It can lead even to cruelty if left unchecked. They start to try to destroy their opponents rather than just beat them.

Degradation - They start to be less than human. They are openly big headed. They show disrespect for ordinary people.

Destruction - Then they end up being destroyed by their own actions and the reactions they bring out in others. Your goal is to make sure it doesn't get this far. Because if it does many innocents will have been hurt before they go. Not the least of which is you.

Of course this wouldn't happen to YOUR representative - or would it? When was the last time you took a close look? Remember the character and capability you looked for in the representative when you elected them the first time? It may change. Many people fall victim to this problem. In fact almost all people fall victim to this condition. It is a rare person that can resist the temptations that power brings. All humans are weak. Everybody has this condition. It is the human condition. That is probably why we don't call it a mental condition officially - because we all have it. All of humanity is a little bit nuts and wants power to keep themselves safe since they are all fearful. So no one likes to admit it or talk about it. Washington and Adams and Franklin and Jefferson all admitted it. That is probably why they were able to control it in themselves. Control is the word here. No one can beat it. No one is immune to it. A few are able to control it. Most are not. So YOUR favorite representative probably cannot.

Because of this you need to look at your representative regularly. Remember the McDonalds example? Remember the sports team example? You need to check on your manager, your coach

regularly. Don't wait until they lose the championship game, or have an 0-10 season, or skip town to change them. Watch them on a regular basis.

As a personal example, a problem I have had is with the WW II generation. Like the founding generation, these people were much more immune to this power problem. It seems that severe hardship like depression and combat are both good for the character and build capability so the nation has had it pretty good these last 50 or 60 years. Not that there weren't bad representatives, but there were fewer of them. These WWII generation representatives that served for so long were so good and policed their bad people so well that some of us, including me, got kind of fat, dumb, and happy about my votes. Maybe you did too. Now though, these new reps have been brought up in the good times. On close inspection, as a group they seem much weaker and less capable. While there are some wonderful individuals serving now, most of them simply have not gone through the fire. Plus the single interest and selfishly motivated lobbying groups have multiplied and improved so the representative's job now is much harder than that of their older counterparts. Thus it is even more difficult for them to do their job right without getting the big head or sliding into the "system" and doing what they are told by the machine. Their PR people cover it up better too. That means that you and I have to watch them even more closely to ensure this experiment succeeds. I plead guilty to not doing enough of that. Maybe you have too? Remember what you are looking for - the erosion of character and putting people in an office that is beyond their capabilities.

That leads to one more thing that you have to look for. You have to look at yourself. You are part of this problem most likely.

People, for some reason tend to value people in power just because they are in power. They tend to kowtow to these people

for no good reason. Watch a rock concert or a sports event if you don't believe me and listen to the conversations around you. Everyone either is putting these players on a pedestal or wanting to kill them, both without reason. Do you do this? I bet you do. I do too. Why? I don't know but it seems to be a common human trait. John Adams said it has something to do with noticeability. Why that should be no one seems to know. Why celebrity is something that is valued way beyond what is reasonable is something to be studied, but clearly he is on to something here. Look at our reaction to a TV newscaster when they come to speak in our town, or a sports figure. I remember when I was speaking in schools. I was an authentic history teacher doing a fun show that would help kids grades. I was lucky to get \$500 a performance, which took two or three days to produce and perform. I found out that some of these sports figures got 4 to 5 times that to talk about drugs or their experiences on the football field and they only worked for a couple of hours. These are fine things for kids to hear, don't get me wrong. Plus these are wonderful people individually and trying to do their civic duty in most cases. But the school paid 4 to 5 times more for this person to come just because they were famous and they got hugely more if you figure it per hour. Plus they were being paid millions by their team and really didn't need the money. Why do you & I do that? Why should beauty, birth, riches, or other charisma sway us more than wisdom and virtue? Answer, it shouldn't. You must not let the fact that your representative appears as a celebrity and is on TV and sends you mail all the time (that you pay for by the way) affect how you think about them. If you ignore wisdom and virtue in your evaluation of these people you will soon have a community and nation without wisdom and virtue. Think about this when you vote.

Do not value birth, wealth, talent, and/or celebrity over virtue, capability, and wisdom. Would you rather have a boss who is good and talented and treats his/her help right or one who just

won a popularity contest? Think of your school student council election. How many times did the popular senior get picked? Did they do a good job? You probably didn't check, but they probably didn't. This is one of the few countries in the world where you get to pick your boss. You had better pick wisely or the privilege will go away.

Just in case all else fails, here is a little tip that is easy to remember:

WHEN IN DOUBT, VOTE THEM OUT.

Don't believe that they are the only people that can do the job. History shows time and again that is not true.

CHAPTER 11 – WHO CAN STOP THIS?

“Democracy is not a spectator sport”

The League of Women Voters

YOU THE PEOPLE, THAT'S WHO! The big question is, will you do it - or let 'we the people' do it? There's that 'we again, the one which let's us off the hook. Someone else will do it – but do they?

You have to answer that but my guess, based on thousands of responses I have gotten all over this country is that you/they pretty much don't, although you know you should. You put it off until tomorrow partly because of everyday pressures and partly because you really are unsure of what exactly you are supposed to do. Let me attack both of those to help get you to do your job, because it is critical to you, to your children, and to world history that you do it. Is that important enough? Don't let it scare you though. Look at it as if you are going through an experience like when you left home

as a teenager and had to make money and be responsible for yourself for the first time. Because that is pretty much all democracy is. It is humanity growing up and being responsible for themselves after centuries of having a Daddy or Mommy leader to care (and often not care) for them.

As I traveled around Washington when I worked there, watching the goings on there and asking myself who can stop this, I was led to a stark conclusion. The answer was me. This nation is built from the bottom up with the people at its root. All problems and all solutions stem from them. I guess Cicero was right when he said, "Within the character of the citizens lies the welfare of the republic". You and I are responsible for this place. It was built for us. If we don't take care of it, who will?

Most Americans realize this. I have talked to thousands of people about this and about 999 out of 1000 shake their heads and say, "your right, we have to do something". There is that we again - and it works just like Aristotle said it would. We becomes they very easily. People realize they need to do their job as citizens but, in the end, leave it for some other part of the "we the people" to do it. It is sort of like a diet. You have every good intention to lose weight, BUT. But the kids, but the job, but the game, but the daily worries - it never gets done. That's been the problem here. Almost everyone knows they have a responsibility to be good citizens but they don't do it. The daily pressures cause them to put aside something they know they have to do until "tomorrow" - which never comes. At least with a diet we have to buy new clothes once in a while. When the pants/dress we want won't fit us any more some of us get serious about the diet. Unfortunately, we don't get to try on a new country very often. We can't weigh the Congress on a scale and say, "Oops they just went over 200 lbs, time to put them on a diet". There is no agreed to standard that we can refer to. So we don't "get to it". That is a formula for disaster

if history is any guide. You and I need to get on our horse and do our critical job as citizens here or this nation won't last.

So how hard is this job? What is the job description? It is pretty easy really. First, you & I need to see the whole government thing for what it is, a human system, built by humans to help them control themselves. Remember the previous chapter, government is there because humans are not perfect. It is, as George Washington said, "like fire, a troublesome servant and a fearsome master, never should it be left alone". You & I need to think about our governments regularly, not as a boss, but as a troublesome servant. Trouble is most of us don't think of ourselves as a boss with a servant. Let's then think about how to deal with a troublesome servant.

You and I are the rich guys here. Some rich uncles, the Founders, left us this country. You and I own it. So it is kind of like owning a sports team. The successful owner, if I have watched enough sports, is one who doesn't interfere too much. He/She picks the day to day on the field management team (coach, general manager, etc.) and sets general guidelines for them. Then they watch the general direction and success of the team. He/she doesn't get into the day-to-day operation of the team. Yes maybe they make suggestions and set broad long term goals, but they don't "micromanage". The good ones are patient with the people they have picked to run the team. They sit back and enjoy themselves and go about their other jobs mostly. They evaluate the team every so often and take notes. Then at the end of the season they make decisions on which of their managers has performed well and which need to be replaced. Not hard but hugely responsible. That's how the citizenship job is.

Here is the basic job description of American Citizen:

1. Participate in your local government as a partner, not a cynic.
2. Participate regularly, rationally and responsibly.
3. Elect good representatives and test them at the local level. Then re-elect the good ones to higher office and monitor their progress to see that they are up to the higher-level job and/or are not getting the "big head".

Think about these things. Think about how often you watch your people. Think about how you interact with them. Do you react well to a boss who criticizes you all the time without offering any suggestions or help? Then don't you do it as the boss of your community. Think about your hiring practices. Hire people who have good character AND capability. They have to have both. The first with no character will steal you blind, the next with no capability will spill soup on your friend's lap at a dinner party. Then you have to watch them periodically. Look for changes in their behavior. Do they all of a sudden go out a lot more often and miss some chores? Maybe they have something going on the side? It may just be innocent and personal; it may be that they are working another job for someone else on your time. Whatever, you hired them to work for you. Make sure they are.

Some of them promise more than they can do. When they get the job you can see, if you watch, that they are simply not cutting it. Then you have to get rid of them at the next opportunity. – for their good as well as yours. If they commit a criminal act there are procedures to get rid of them immediately. Do whichever is right as you see it.

Speaking of what's right let me list a few things I have learned around the world which are important for you to think about when trying to do what's right as a democratic citizen.

Value Freedom – be careful about demanding too much safety and security. Make sure you strike a balance.

Think, don't feel. This nation was founded on the idea that humans can rule themselves without some strong person doing their thinking for them – and then punishing those who don't think like him or her. Our Founders set out to replace the dominator model of human government with a partnership model. They had faith in your ability to rule yourselves. You will tell history if they were right or wrong. Thinking and reason are a key to successfully governing yourselves. It is like the first apartment. It may not feel good to pay the bills, but you had better do it.

Understand the nature and value of yourself as a human being. You are more than an animal. You have a spirit. You are a spirit in a body, not a body with a spirit. You have a creator. You need to live up to your potential, not down to the lowest common denominator.

Understand the truth and nature of freedom. It is more than, "I can do whatever I want". It is more like, "I am responsible for myself and need to work with my fellow rulers to make a good community for all, and ensure that good government exists for myself and my children".

Make sure your representatives put the ideals of the nation first in making their decisions. The spirit is more important than the letter of the law here.

Remember that government exists to serve the People, not the other way around.

You are free to change your government and choose those who

operate it. Don't ever lose that right and use it responsibly. Remember, the first responsibility of a free people is to remain free. And you only get one shot, so watch your representatives closely. You can't say, "Oops, we won't do that again" after the Caesar takes power because then you will have lost this right. He/she will use what is now their power to keep it.

Intelligence is also needed in the people's representatives particularly at the higher levels. Choose wisely or you will get stupid government.

Virtue and knowledge are needed in those who would elect them. How can you elect people of character and capability if you don't know it in yourselves. You are a grown up now. Don't wait for Mommy or Daddy to tell you to straighten up. Work on your humanity regularly. All people are all pretty bad but can get better if they work at it. If you want to know how you are doing look at your representatives. They are a reflection of you.

The police and military here must serve the ideals first, and not individuals or territory. No police states here. Here the citizens are primarily responsible for their own safety. Help your police keep you safe - not so much with new laws, but by helping out. The atmosphere of your community is not built by laws, but by your actions.

Ensure life long education for all people - good education. Education is necessary to rule yourselves. It is critical for a democracy to have a good education system to allow its rulers to learn how to be informed and think. Again think with your mind, not your feelings.

Along the same line, make rational not emotional decisions when voting. You can correct a mental mistake because it was clearly

reasoned and documented. You can pick it apart when it proves wrong and do it better the next time. An emotional mistake is usually made quickly and without reason and so is hard to analyze and easy to make again - and usually is.

Watch your legal system too. Make sure there is equal justice under law. Other wise the all are created equal ideal becomes a joke.

The office is more important than the officeholder. A very critical concept in a nation of laws, not of people.

Build a system based on merit, not favoritism or heredity. This is why most of your forebears came here. Don't lose this. Hereditary rulers can be just as real with or without a title. They have to have power just because they are somebody, not because they earned it. Make people earn your vote.

Your unity is more important than your differences. Don't let the Parties turn you into partisans. Remember the answer to almost all of our problems can be framed into something 80% of you can agree with. Neither Party wants to do that. They need to retain their identities and go to extremes to do so.

God is of God. Religion is of man. The Founders separated religion and state, not God and state. Put all religions on an equal footing regardless of which one works for you. Remember they all have their human side. And while you're at it remember the other spiritual principle behind the United States - If there is one God, there is one people. These principles are key to someday bringing peace to the world.

People are responsible for themselves and their relations with others. Rights equal responsibilities. Do you observe your

responsibilities equally with your rights?

12. A SUGGESTED APPROACH

"The American Revolutionary War is over; but this is far from being the case with the American Revolution. On the contrary, nothing but the first act of the great drama is closed. It remains yet to establish and perfect our new forms of government, and prepare the principles, morals, and manners of our citizens for these forms of government after they are established and brought to perfection."

Dr. Benjamin Rush 1787

"The things that will destroy America are prosperity-at-any-price, peace-at-any-price, safety-first instead of duty-first, the love of soft living, and the get-rich-quick theory of life."

Theodore Roosevelt"

"Chapters in every community, committees to study and present in simple terms the laws under consideration, including court decisions, and examine the candidacy and fitness of all aspirants for public office to make sure they would advocate and protect the fundamental principles of the Constitution and the Bill of Rights. It overcomes party politics, special interests, and educates voters."

George Washington

Well here you are. I have to assume that those who have read this far are interested in making this happen. Making the USA a nation that really is of, by, and for the people. So let's review the bidding to see exactly what it is you have to do and then suggest a way to

do it. A way based on the principles laid down here. A way that will accomplish our stated purpose of a truly people centered nation. A way where a nation of grown-ups, who can govern themselves rationally and responsibly, lead the way to a new world. A world where might does not make right - a world where right makes right. And that right is decided by the people themselves through a process of reason and reflection.

To do this you must keep the basics in mind. Let's go over them again. Remember the basic job description of American Citizen:

1. Participate in your local government as a partner, not a cynic.
2. Participate regularly, rationally and responsibly.
3. Elect good representatives and test them at the local level. Then re-elect the good ones to higher office and monitor their progress to see that they are up to the higher-level job and/or are not getting the "big head".

To do this you have to learn three skills:

1. Learn how to gather information.
2. Learn how to talk to one another to decide what to do for the good of all.
3. Learn how to recognize the power problem and deal with it.

And remember the purpose for doing it - running your community for all its people, not the favored few, and not for selfish reasons. That is the only way democracy can survive in the long run. If you leave it to the well-meaning "activists" or the selfish power seekers it will not last long.

Plus let's remember what happens if you do not do this. Remember Caesar, remember Rome, remember the power problem, remember that if you don't do your job other's will – for their own good, not yours! If you have forgotten this point, or don't get it, please re-read the book as it is very important. If you don't really realize the consequences of not doing your job as citizen, you will never get to it. It will never be important enough to outweigh the day-to-day realities you all face.

OK so you get it. But how do you get there? Where do you get the time? What can one person do? That's the story I have heard from everywhere and everybody for 15 years now. And you know what, you're right! One person can do very little to change their town and no one has enough time for this stuff and to do it right.

So the suggestion is, do it as a group. This way you will have influence. This way you will have time.

Politicians, particularly local ones, have lives to lead too. They have the same day-to-day realities that you do. They want to do their jobs well too. They can't spend their time listening to one person after another, each with a separate purpose. To do their jobs well they need to hear from people who have already talked to their neighbors about the community problems and come up with solutions that all can live with. That way they can get going on solving them. In fact they will be very happy if you do this. Then they don't have to keep trying to be King Solomon and be themselves. It helps them a lot. As one police chief told me, "No community has enough policeman in this country. The people are the ones who are responsible for their own safety and we are only here to help. If the people don't help we will have to build a police state to control things." The same goes for your highway departments, your city/town planners, your fire departments, etc.

Think how much better your community could run if you worked out the basic problems yourselves and suggested solutions to your representatives - and how much cheaper too? Your governments will listen gladly to group solutions. It is much better than listening to individual gripes.

You solve the time thing this way too. There is lots of information out there in your community. There is a lot going on. The problem with your government, particularly at the local level, is that there is too much information, not too little. That is because your Constitution and Declaration demand that all normal government business be public knowledge. It is inherent in our system from the ground up since the beginning. But how do you get to know all this stuff and decide what information to act on? The fact is, as an individual, it is impossible. But as a group it can be done. You split up the work so all get a share of it they can deal with and then share notes at your meetings. If there is more than one group in town, it gets even easier.

Here is a suggested way to give you an idea. You can follow this or figure out a better way if you like. This method, however, has been tried and tested for 15 years and works well. I suggest you try it for 2 years and see what happens to both your community and yourselves. It doesn't take a whole lot of effort. I used to say that if you give me \$10 and 10 hours a year I will give you your community back. The price has gone up slightly due to inflation but the time is still valid. You can give it more time if you want and you will be even more effective, but this minimum will do it. It is not a constant either. You probably will meet more often around an election and probably will take the summer off. It is not that difficult. You just have to DO it.

Here is a short version of the process for you to try:

FORMING THE YOU THE PEOPLE GROUPS

1. Each Group should have between 5 and 13 people.
2. There can be as many groups as you wish.
3. Each group should be pre-picked by diversity of thought as much as possible. Put one extrovert and introvert, leader and follower, adventurer and planner, relater and visionary, etc. into each group. They should NOT be focus groups or partisan groups of any kind. That just multiplies our problems. Remember they are designed to help you think for yourselves and help run your community/town/city - not to slavishly repeat mantras from above to bring about a selfish, unthinking, feel-good idea. If you do not bring out all sides of the question you will not get a complete answer. If you are not having any problems with the other group members and/or you all agree every time that you are super at cooperation and respect, you are probably doing something wrong.
4. Once picked, the groups should remain together for as long as possible. If one leaves for whatever reason, find someone else. If you get really popular, split into two groups once you get to 14 or more members.

ABBREVIATED YOU THE PEOPLE MEETING FORMAT FOR EACH SESSION

1. Start with a prayer
2. Administrative Announcements

3. Remind everyone of the 7 Citizenship Skills (Cooperation, Patience, Fairness, Respect, Strength, Self-Improvement, and Balance) and that their group conduct and their decisions must follow and demonstrate these skills. Then discuss the citizenship skill assignment. (Each meeting there should be a focus on one of the citizenship skills. A little homework assignment should be decided upon at the previous meeting and the discussion should focus on how everyone fared on the homework.)

4. Discuss your local information assignments. Individuals who volunteered to go to the City/Town Council/School Board or who researched a particular issue of interest to the group should give their reports. Then a normal discussion and vote on what to do next with each item of business.

5. Evaluate the process. Remember the process is as important as the end result. If you fail as a group you no longer have any power. Be honest about how you are doing as a group and make adjustments as necessary.

6. Pick a new leader for the next session. The group leadership must rotate. No one should get too much power; remember the Constitution. Plus it teaches those who normally follow some of the difficulties of leading.

ABBREVIATED GROUND RULES

Ground Rule 1: Each group meeting should start and end on time. If necessary, you may want to limit comments to no more than 2 minutes.

Ground Rule 2: A group leader will run each group meeting. This job will rotate among group members each meeting. The group leader will be responsible for facilitating the group discussion,

making sure everyone follows the ground rules, and the group stays on track and on time. He/she may assign someone else in the group to monitor the time during the meeting and someone else to serve as recorder. These duties may rotate if desired, but the leader will change each meeting.

Ground Rule 3: Each group member should be conscious of using the seven citizenship skills and following the ground rules during all Citizen Action Group meetings.

Ground Rule 4: These groups are not meant to be therapy groups. Personal topics should be left out of group discussions.

Ground Rule 5: If a group member gets angry or emotional, he or she may be asked to leave the group for five to fifteen minutes to cool-off (the timing is up to the group leader), but he or she must agree to return to the group after the cooling-off period.

Ground Rule 6: Each group member will be allowed time to speak if he/she desires. The group leader will also make sure that each member has voiced his or her views and participated in the process. An issue cannot be decided upon unless everyone in the group has spoken, or has openly chosen not to speak.

The citizenship skills referred to above are really important. They were installed to keep the meetings civil so things can get done. They are better than straight Robert's Rules of Order since they do not shut out emotion. They allow it, but control it. Emotion is real and must be dealt with if you are to have group decisions that last and stick, but in the end reason and reflection must rule the day. These skills are one of the many norms of these groups that make this happen.

Here they are, spelled out:

THE SEVEN CITIZENSHIP SKILLS

Skill 1: Cooperation - We the People, not we the persons
When making decisions let others help.

Skill 2: Patience - A more perfect union
Try to make decisions that are doable, not perfect.

Skill 3: Fairness - Common good vs. individual rights
Remember we're trying to run a civilization here.

Skill 4: Respect - Listen to your fellow rulers
Everyone has a piece of the truth within them, listen for it.

Skill 5: Strength - Stand up when right, sit down when wrong
Are you one of those "often wrong, but never in doubt" or no opinion people?

Skill 6: Self-Improvement - Seek knowledge and skills
Make sure you have all the right facts to make the decision.

Skill 7: Balance - Harmonize or compromise
Look at all sides of every issue, no matter what you feel.

Why only these seven you say – good question? These skills are certainly not the only ones you can use to conduct your business well. They are however the base ones, without which you can't conduct your business well.

If you want to see the expanded full version of this process, now or after you try the short version, please call 1-800-833-5310 or go to www.youthepeople.com or email us at info@youthepeople.com. It

is far more effective and gives much more information and guidance than this book.

Well there you have it, simple, easy, and fun - just like having your own car, your own apartment, etc. when you left home. It is great once you get over the first hurdle – the fear of doing it. It is hard at first because it is new. You will make some silly mistakes. You will learn a lot. And in the end you will be much better off because what you do will be for you.

Lastly please again remember what happens if you do not do it. This nation fails. Humanity returns to its deadly past with decisions made by accident and force. Your successors will no longer answer to God, but to some human. Your children and grandchildren will answer to some slave driver because they will mostly be slaves. They may call it something nicer in the future but the reality will be the same. It has been a miserable existence for humanity as any study of history will show. The Founders referred to life in their day as rude, brutish, and short. Is that how you want life for your great grandchildren? If you and I are to ever solve the great problems that face us as a race, we have to let our ability to solve our problems grow as fast as our ability to create them. If you and I do not learn to ourselves grow up as fast as our technologies we will just destroy ourselves more efficiently.

It might even be worse than that, believe it or not. Whatever you think of the global warming scare, it shows how fragile life is here on earth. This is a lonely planet in a very hostile space that could wipe out human existence completely in hours. It will some day if people don't get smart and learn to work together. If people work together this great new technology being developed could save this world, perhaps. If people don't work at getting better and getting along, the technology will be used to destroy the civilization if not

the world. The humanities studies and progress must improve along with the technology if it is to be of benefit.

So your job as citizen is even more important than just creating a better community. It can eventually create a survivable better world. Please do it. Please don't let the world go back to the old way. Thousands of people have suffered and died to get humanity this opportunity – an opportunity to break the cycle of violence and death that has wracked this world for so many centuries.

As I said before, the Founders trusted your capacity for greatness. You will tell history whether they were right or wrong. Please get it right. Look up not down. Go forward not back. You, yes YOU – it is up to each of you.

May God bless your wonderful new way of life.

I wish you Godspeed!

“Citizenship is the American Ideal. There are an army of actualities opposed to that ideal, but there are no ideals opposed to that ideal?”

G. K. Chesterton

“Government is not reason, it is not eloquence, it is a force; like fire, a troublesome servant and a fearsome master. Never for a moment should it be left to irresponsible action.”

George Washington

WELL IF YOU HAVE GOTTEN THIS FAR I ASSUME YOU GOT SOMETHING OUT OF THIS BOOK. IF SO, I WOULD ASK YOU

TO MAKE A TAX DEDUCTIBLE CONTRIBUTION \$5 OR MORE TO "THE CITIZENSHIP PROJECT", P. O. BOX 88918, STEILACOOM, WA USA 98388. THAT WAY WE CAN KEEP THESE IDEAS ALIVE AND SPREAD THEM FURTHER.

IF YOU WANT TO EXPLORE THE IDEA OF FORMING SOME "YOU THE PEOPLE" GROUPS IN YOUR AREA, PLEASE WRITE TO THE SAME ADDRESS OR EMAIL US AT INFO@YOUTHEPEOPLE.COM.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR INTEREST IN OUR GREAT EXPERIMENTAL NATION DESIGNED TO CHANGE THE WORLD. YOU ARE THE KEY TO ITS SUCCESS!!!

APPENDICES:

APPENDIX 1. CITIZENSHIP SKILLS -

CITIZENSHIP SKILLS

Citizenship skills are basic human values drawn from the Constitution. They come from the Preamble to the Constitution. They are also the skills of good group decision-making and are constantly practiced and evaluated in the "You the PEOPLE" program.

THE PREAMBLE TO THE U. S. CONSTITUTION

"We the people of the United States, in order to form a more perfect union, establish justice, insure domestic tranquility, provide for the common defense, promote the general welfare, and secure

the blessing of liberty to ourselves and our posterity, do ordain and establish this Constitution for the United States of America."

THE SEVEN CITIZENSHIP SKILLS

Skill 1: Cooperation - We the People, not we the persons
When making decisions let others help.

Skill 2: Patience - A more perfect union
Try to make decisions that are doable, not perfect.

Skill 3: Fairness - Establish Justice that balances the common good vs. individual rights. We're trying to run a civilization here.

Skill 4: Respect - Insure tranquility, listen to your fellow rulers.
Everyone has a piece of the truth within him or her, listen for it.

Skill 5: Strength - Stand up when right and for the right, but sit down when you are wrong.

Skill 6: Self-Improvement - Seek the knowledge and skills you need to be a better person. Make sure you have all the right facts to make the decision.

Skill 7: Balance - Harmonize or compromise
Look at all sides of every issue, no matter what you feel.

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APPENDIX 2. 7 PRINCIPLES -

7 PRINCIPLES FOR SUCCESSFUL DEMOCRACY; IT TAKES MORE THAN JUST A CONSTITUTION.

Democracy is more than just a form of government. It takes a complete change of thinking by human about themselves, about the use of power, and about their relationships with other humans.

The key to this is a set of principles. These are necessary as guidelines for people to aspire to. Here are seven of them that have proven their worth:

1. Believe in a higher power. If you do not look up you will surely go down.
2. Be humble, doubt your infallibility once in a while.
3. Seek all the education you can get.
4. Remember that the money the government gets in taxes is yours, wherever they get it from. Make sure they spend it wisely. Do not let your representatives bribe you with your own money.
5. Try to build police forces and armies that are responsible to you first and the government second. Then support them.
6. Establish regular democracy meetings with your neighbors. Do not wait until election time to find out what is going on.
7. Elect representatives based on character and capability - not family, not party, not issues, not image. You can survive

representatives who are loyal to the democratic ideal but make honest mistakes. You cannot survive selfish representatives who steal your treasure and your power for themselves. In short be a human first, a U. S. Citizen second, and a Republican, Democrat, green, blue, whatever third, if ever.

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APPENDIX 3. 7 OTHER GOOD RULES TO GO BY -

Then there are seven other basic rules for good order that you should look for that must be understood and followed by a majority of citizens in a democracy for it to work. Here they are:

1. Work together. No issue or problem is more important than your unity.
2. Try to make things better, not perfect. None of us knows what perfect is anyway. Some problems will just have to be solved by your children.
3. Make sure the justice system is fair and treats all equally. Remember also that the office is more important than the office holder. No one can be above the law.
4. Build and keep good relations regularly with your neighbors and have a good police force that works for you to keep those who do harm to others in line.
5. Keep a good defense posture. All dictatorships must hate democracy. They will try to destroy it if they can. Every citizen of a free country owes his or her services to help keep it free, and the first duty of a free people is to remain free.
6. Build an economy and government that promotes people of ability, desire, and effort rather than family or friendship or tribal/national ties. Allow all to work at whatever they choose. Treat them as individuals.
7. Educate all as much as possible. If you vote yourself money you will eat for a few days. If you vote yourself education you will eat for a lifetime.

Make sure your education system teaches the ideas and ideals of your democracy.

AND - The Golden Rule of Medicine - and government too. DO NO HARM. When in doubt and the world will not end if you don't do it now, wait a while. Don't mess up the whole thing by concentrating on a particular case or policy and acting based on that. Elect cool heads and keep one yourself. The world has been here a long while. We have only been here for a little while. We are the kids here trying to find our way with no adult supervision. Stay humble!

“Doubt your infallibility once in a while”. Benjamin Franklin

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APPENDIX 4. A SELF-CITIZENSHIP TEST -

YOU THE PEOPLE CITIZEN TEST QUESTIONS:

HOW WELL DO YOU DO YOUR JOB IN GOVERNMENT?

1. What is government and why do we have one?
2. What is your role in government?
3. Did you vote last time?
4. How well did you do at it and why?
5. Should you pick candidates based primarily on party or image or character and capability? What did you base your vote on?
6. What kind of government do you have? How does it work?
7. What is a constitution anyway?
8. How did we get ours and where is it?
9. What skills do you think you need to do your job as citizen?
10. What is the difference between a subject and a citizen? Which are you?
11. How seriously do you take your vote? How much time do you spend preparing?

Appendix 5

INFORMATION EVALUATION

One of the main core competencies of citizenship that You the PEOPLE teaches is the ability to be an informed voter. The use of the school library, local town and university libraries, news sources, and the internet should be encouraged. A major challenge in using this program will be how to use the information available to you. The problem in a democratic society like ours is not too little information but too much. That's why you should spread this work among as many You the PEOPLE groups as you can. Four points should be remembered any time you use You the PEOPLE:

- 1. What sources of information are available?**
- 2. How to use the sources.**
- 3. How to check for accuracy of information.**
- 4. Using more than one source of information**

The key to learning these points is, why. The key phrase you should always use when looking into an issue is ASK WHY!

People in politics do things with a purpose. Most of the time it is a good purpose. Some of the time it is a selfish or corrupt or even criminal purpose. You are the boss. You need to be able to figure out why your employees are doing what they are doing. You need to separate the sheep from the goats so to speak so you can make appropriate decisions at election time.

While you are asking, "Why?", there are two factors to remember whenever you are evaluating information. One is numbers, the other is adjectives. They can be and are used to mislead and therefore must be watched carefully by those citizens seeking accurate information.

There is an old saying that numbers don't lie, but liars use numbers. Sadly, the misuse of numbers to mislead people is commonplace in today's world. It comes in three main forms:

1. Outright false numbers - While relatively rare these are more common than you might think. In many cases the organization putting them out simply made them up to support their case or their cause. They generally fit what is commonly believed anyway and so are rarely checked. Using multiple sources or checking the references from the source of the numbers will uncover this. In many of these cases the referenced source simply does not exist or never issued any such information. A key to look for is numbers about the same issue that are not even close to each other. This is a pretty good sign that something is wrong.

2. Misleading numbers - These are by far the most common offense. In fact there are very few interest groups/organizations and political parties that don't do this. Here the numbers are cleverly arranged to support the position of the group or organization. For instance an organization supporting the elimination of logging in an area may issue a statement about the numbers of trees that have been lost in that area during a given period. They will include all trees lost whether to logging or forest fires, and they will stretch the period to include a time when there were a lot of forest fires. A group opposing welfare benefits may include all types of beneficiaries including temporary unemployment recipients in their numbers. The goal of all these groups is to make the problem look like a crisis. You act immediately on a crisis; a problem can be thought through. Therefore if you are a group that wants something done you try to make it into a crisis. This is so commonplace that you should expect it. Never make a decision that involves numbers without

checking them with some other source that supports the opposing view on the issue. This unfortunately includes governmental agencies, particularly in the executive branch, that are subject to political pressure. If their numbers differ greatly from one political administration to another with no other apparent cause you need to ask why. They probably are wrong, incomplete, or at least misleading.

3. Old numbers - This is common among government agencies who when asked a question will dig out the last data they have on the matter to give you. Always check how old the numbers are. If the data is 10 years old, and much has gone on since then they are probably wrong. A good example is the Consumer Price Index. This is based on the price of a bag of groceries. Major government payments in the billions of dollars are based on this index. Some years ago someone noticed that the contents of the base bag of groceries hadn't changed in 40 years. Many items were out of style or no longer used by most families. This was costing the government a huge amount, but no one had taken the time and effort to raise the issue to update the numbers.

Adjectives are another problem. This is particularly true in political activities. You only have to look at all the political ads lately for examples. When you see a problem or a person referred to using very negative or very positive adjectives, they are probably trying to avoid a real issue or promote themselves at the expense of others. The Media is guilty of this as well. They use sensational adjectives to try to make stories more spectacular than they really are in order to get you to read, watch, or listen to them. Remember truth is made up of nouns and verbs. Adjectives only modify the truth and are used regularly to do so. Be wary of people or organizations that use a lot of adjectives in their advertising and promotional material.

Also watch the verbal adjectives. News organizations want you to listen to them so they want to make their news more important, more spectacular than others. One way to do that is the old show every car crash and fire technique. Another more

subtle way is to use emotional expressions and use their words in an emotional way. It is one thing to say, "It was a bad day on Wall St." It is another to say, "It was a baaaad day on Wall Street" with a big frown on your face. These new news anchors generally no very little about what they are reporting. They are like movie stars. Their job is to get you to like them and think they are a real newsperson when really they are only an actor. Be aware of the TV bait and switch where you think you are getting the news, but you are really getting a show.

There is one other old saying that is helpful when you are evaluating information. It says "if it looks like a duck, and quacks like a duck, and waddles like a duck, it probably is a duck". Keep this saying in mind as you sort through all the information available in today's world. If someone says this waddling quacking thing really isn't a duck at all, ask "why" two or three times and double-check their answers. Most of you are smarter than you think you are. Don't be fooled into thinking you're a dummy or insensitive or stupid just because you can't understand something. If what you are checking out doesn't make sense to you, it probably is not very sensible. Get a second and maybe a third opinion and/or check it out with other published sources.

When you find one or two of your employees who are doing things for a selfish, corrupt, or criminal purpose, you need to vote against them at election time. Don't forget to look into their character before you elect them in the first place. This will save you lots of money in the long run. This will not keep you totally safe however. People change sometimes when they get power. In fact there is another old saying, "If you want to find out about a person's character, give them power". Watch, Watch, Watch! It is your money and your government.

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APPENDIX 6

THINGS TO REMEMBER WHEN PRACTICING DEMOCRACY

- 1. Democracy takes time.**
- 2. Democracy is about people.**
- 3. Democracy is about collaboration.**
- 4. We are all equal - - equally lost!**
- 5. Democracy doesn't just happen. You have to work at it.**
- 6. People and communities are at the center of their own environments.**
- 7. Work at building trusted institutions. The office is more important than the office holder.**
- 8. Elect leadership that inspires.**
- 9. Build people's capacity to dialogue.**
- 10. Look for the problem behind the problem.**
- 11. Include as many as will in the conversation.**

12. Build a sense of ownership and possibility.

13. Stay with the process. Build a more perfect union. Let your children take it from there.

APPENDIX 7

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