

Inspiration and Challenges from America's Founders

In Post-9/11 America
09/09/09



Quotations from multiple websites

Have We Acquiesced to Fear?



Fear is the foundation of most governments; but it is so sordid and brutal a passion, and renders men in whose breasts it predominates so stupid and miserable, that Americans will not be likely to approve of any political institution which is founded on it.

John Adams, Thoughts on Government, 1776

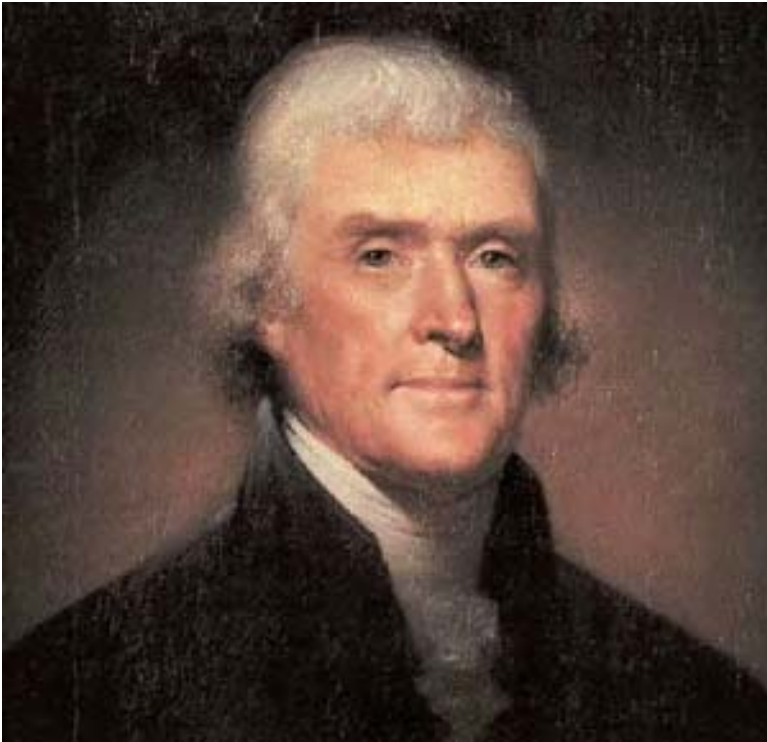
Have We Been Given A False Choice?



They that can give up essential liberty to purchase a little temporary safety, deserve neither liberty nor safety.

Benjamin Franklin, Historical Review of Pennsylvania, 1759

Are Things Different Today?



"Aristocrats... fear the people, and wish to transfer all power to the higher classes of society."

--Thomas Jefferson to William Short, 1825.
ME 16:96

"I am not among those who fear the people. They, and not the rich, are our dependence for continued freedom."

--Thomas Jefferson to Samuel Kercheval, 1816. ME 15:39

<http://etext.virginia.edu/jefferson/quotations/jeff0350.htm>

More Similarities to Today?

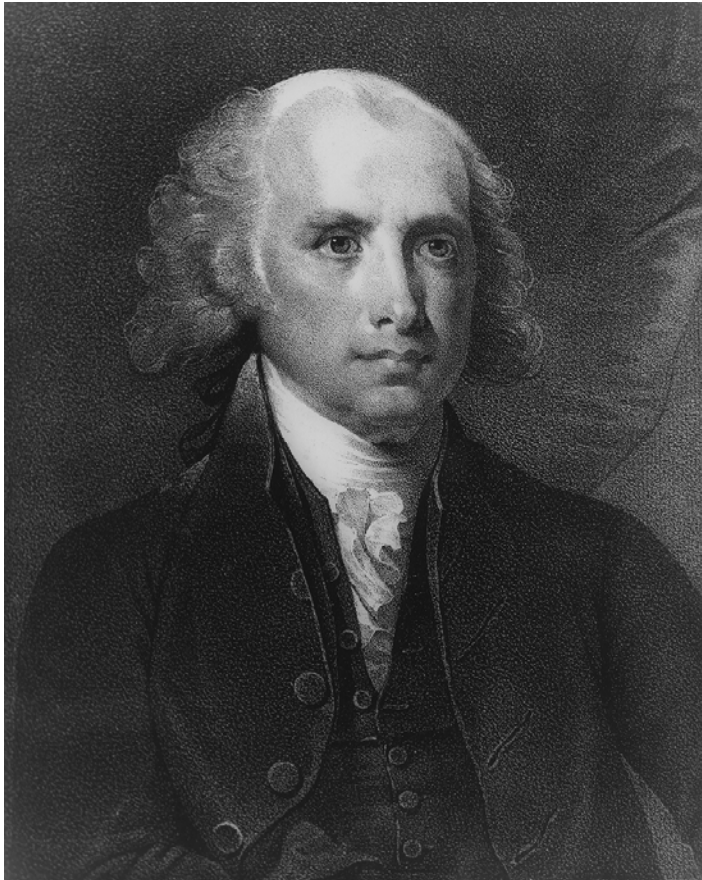
Without Freedom of Thought there can be no such Thing as Wisdom; and no such Thing as Public Liberty, without Freedom of Speech.

Benjamin Franklin, writing as Silence Dogood, No. 8, July 9, 1722



<http://www.ushistory.org/franklin/info/index.htm>

True Today?



There are more instances of the abridgment of the freedom of the people by gradual and silent encroachments of those in power than by violent and sudden usurpations.

James Madison, speech to the Virginia Ratifying Convention, June 16, 1788

The Stakes are High

But a Constitution of Government once changed from Freedom, can never be restored. Liberty, once lost, is lost forever.

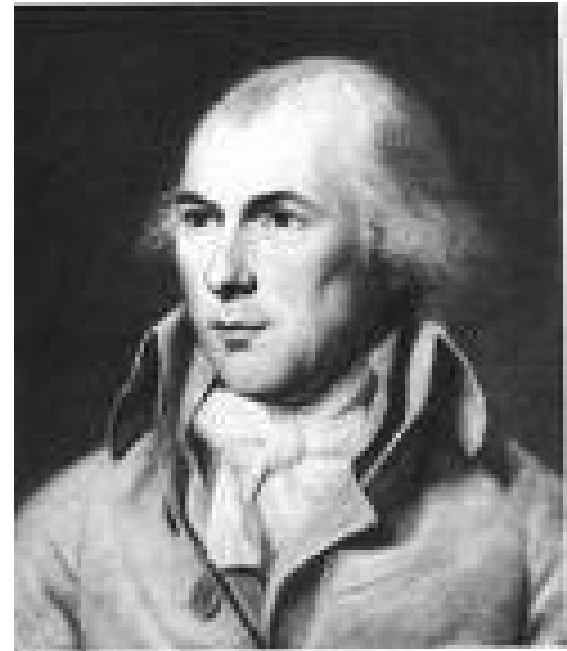
John Adams, letter to Abigail Adams, July 17, 1775



A Warning

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

James Madison, speech in the Virginia constitutional convention, Dec 2, 1829



And More Warnings

Where an excess of power prevails, property of no sort is duly respected. No man is safe in his opinions, his person, his faculties, or his possessions.

James Madison, essay in the National Gazette, March 27, 1792

Wherever the real power in a Government lies, there is the danger of oppression.

James Madison, letter to Thomas Jefferson, October 17, 1788

Independence and Knowledge Are Forever Linked

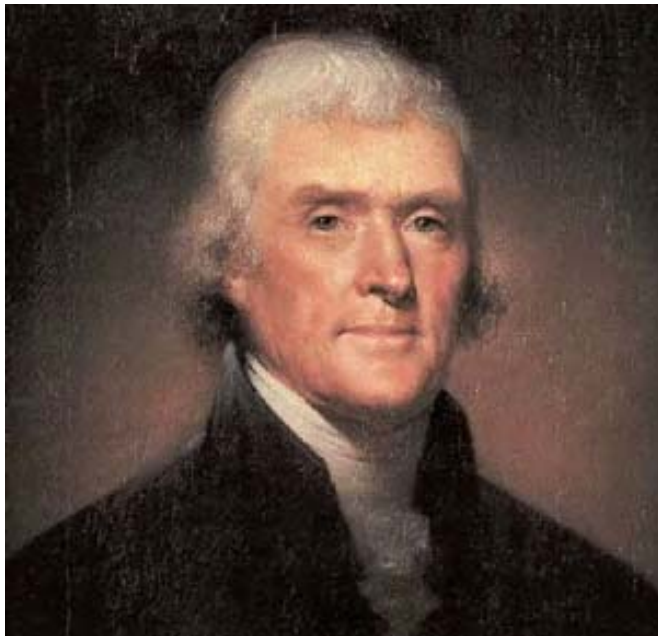


A popular Government, without popular information, or the means of acquiring it, is but a Prologue to a Farce or a Tragedy; or, perhaps both. Knowledge will forever govern ignorance: And a people who mean to be their own Governors, must arm themselves with the power which knowledge gives.

James Madison, letter to W.T. Barry,
August 4, 1822

Our Responsibility

EDUCATION

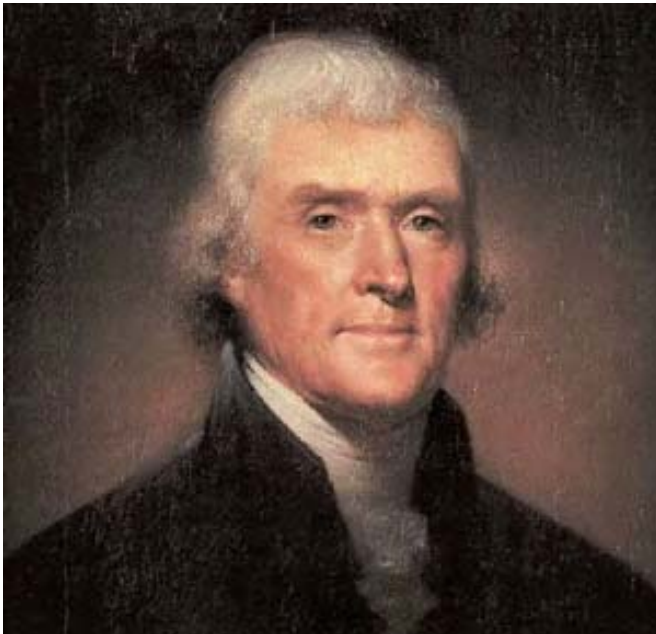


There is only one force in the nation that can be depended upon to keep the government pure and the governors honest, and that is the people themselves. They alone, **if well informed**, are capable of preventing the corruption of power, and of restoring the nation to its rightful course if it should go astray. They alone are the safest depository of the ultimate powers of government. (emphasis added)

<http://etext.virginia.edu/jefferson/quotations/jeff0350.htm>

Our Responsibility

ACTION



"No government can continue good, but under the control of the people."

Thomas Jefferson to John Adams, 1819

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Our Challenge

“Independence forever.”

John Adams' last public words as a toast for the celebration of the fiftieth anniversary of the Declaration of Independence



What you can do....

EDUCATION: *“... a people who mean to be their own Governors, must arm themselves with the power which knowledge gives.” James Madison letter to W.T. Barry, August 4, 1822*

ACTION: *"No government can continue good, but under the control of the people." Thomas Jefferson to John Adams, 1819*

Visit our website: www.meetup.com/SouthJerseyJBS

Contact members of our Meetup for more information on how you can become involved in restoring our “government of the people, by the people, and for the people”.