



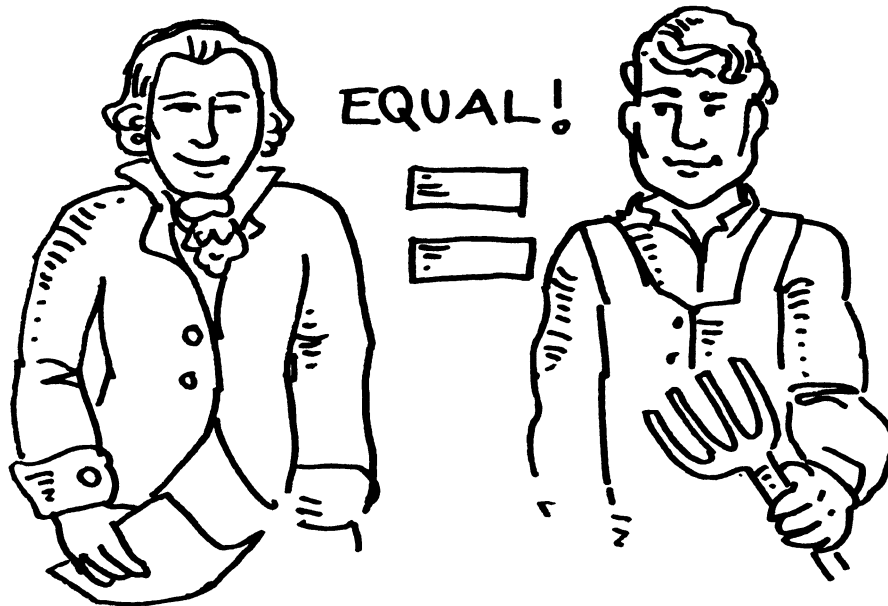
## Five Points of Discussion

**“We hold these truths to be self-evident that all men are created equal.”**

**T**his statement relates that all are made equal at birth by their creator— equal in the sight of God and the law.

Equality in the sight of God is in the religious realm and means being equal spiritually. Equal legal justice means equal treatment under equal laws—that is, just laws expressive of “just powers” designed to make and

keep secure the equal rights of all Individuals and therefore, compatible with Natural Law (God’s Law) on which Man’s God-given, unalienable rights are based. It requires respect by government and provides for individual freedom and opportunity to realize one’s highest potential in all aspects of life, including the opportunity to strive for material security and advancement through one’s own self-reliant efforts.” (The American Ideal of 1776.)



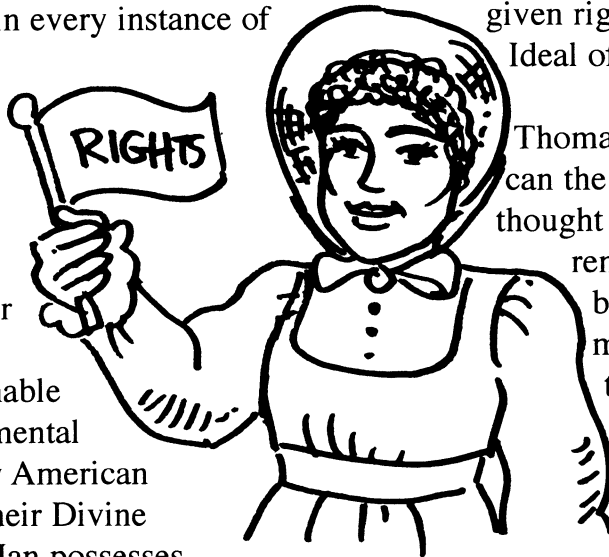
### Suggestions for Study

- Where does our freedom come from? Let’s talk about it.



**“All People are endowed by God with certain unalienable rights.”**

The term “Unalienable rights” should, in every instance of use, be read as meaning God-given, unalienable rights, because the only basis for considering them unalienable is the fundamental and uniquely American concept of their Divine origin that Man possesses them solely by reason of endowment by his Creator. Unless considered to be of Divine origin, these rights cannot properly be classified as being unalienable. They are then subject to being considered as mere conditional privileges granted by government. In such case, there can be no moral or constitutional basis for objecting to their violation, by government or by others, such as exists in the case of God-given rights



as protected traditionally by the American constitutional system: such government-granted privileges are not comparable in dignity with God-given rights.” (The American Ideal of 1776,)

Thomas Jefferson wrote: “And can the liberties of a nation be thought secure when we have removed their only firm basis, a conviction in the minds of the people that these liberties are the gift of God.” (Notes on the State of Virginia, 1782.)

In 1775, Alexander Hamilton wrote: “The Sacred Rights of mankind are not to be rummaged for among old parchments or musty records. They are written as with a sunbeam, in the whole volume of human nature, by the Hand of the Divinity itself, and can never be erased or obscured by mortal power.” (Hamilton Works)

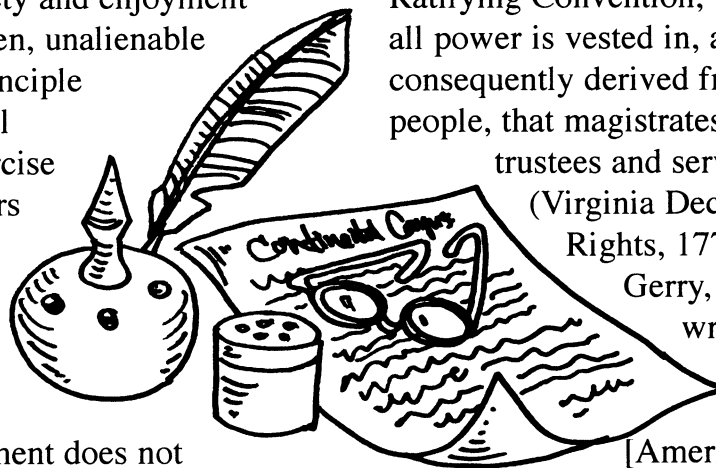
### Suggestions for Study

- What rights do we possess? Let’s talk about it.



**“ . . . governments are instituted among men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed.”**

George Washington stated: “The basis of our political system is the right of the people to make and to alter their constitutions of government.” (George Washington’s Farewell Address). The founders created the government primarily to serve one supreme purpose: to “secure” the safety and enjoyment of their God-given, unalienable rights.” This principle requires that civil government exercise only those powers which are specifically granted it. If a power is not granted the national government does not possess it, and therefore may not act as though it does possess it. The principle of consent is found throughout the constitution. The Preamble asserts that “We the people of the United States . . . do ordain and establish this constitution.” The whole notion of our government is predicated upon the requirement that the people consent together to establish the form of civil government. The Constitution states we have a republican form of



government—both state and national. Republican, meaning that the people’s representatives govern according to a written delegation of authority. Under this concept, the representatives are charged to govern according to law, administered within the context of the written constitution. Our founders repeatedly counseled on this subject, “Rulers are the servants and agents of the people, the people are their masters.” (Patrick Henry, Virginia Ratifying Convention, 1788.) “That all power is vested in, and consequently derived from, the people, that magistrates are their trustees and servants.”

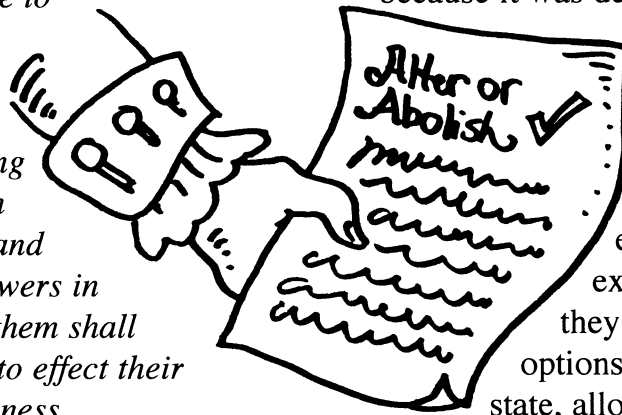
(Virginia Declaration of Rights, 1776) Elbridge Gerry, a delegate, wrote in his “An Essay”  
“All

[American] writers on government agree . . . That the origin of all powers is in the people, and they have an incontestable right to check the creatures of their own creation, vested with certain powers to guard the life, liberty, and property of the community . . .” (“Observations on the New Constitution . . .”, by A. Columbian Patriot. 1788)



**“ . . .The People retain the right to alter or abolish an unlawful form of government as an exercise of self-government.”**

**T**hat 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.



Ends” refers to the unalienable rights which civil government is instituted to preserve. It is the people’s right to alter or abolish the form of government, but it was not to be exercised lightly. The founders were abolishing the monarchical form of government under which they lived because it was destroying their

liberty. They had petitioned their government for redress several times with no effect, having exhausted this option they had only a few options left; flee to another state, allow it to continue, or if the tyranny is too widespread, then resist it.

The phrase “Destructive of these

### Suggestions for Study

- What is the proper role of government?
- Do the people have a right and say in what the government does?



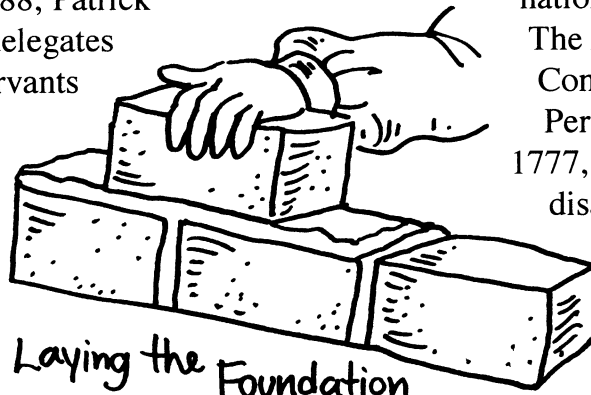
**“ . . .The Declaration asserts that the people are responsible for instituting new government, Laying it’s Foundation on such Principles, and organizing its Powers in such form as to them shall seem most likely to effect their Safety and Happiness.”**

**A**t the Virginia Ratifying Convention of 1788, Patrick Henry reminded the delegates that “Rules are the servants and agents of the people; the people are their masters.” (Elliot’s Debates vol. 3)

Samuel Adams also said, “The multitude I am speaking of, is the body of the people no contemptible multitude for whose sake government is instituted; or rather, who have themselves

erected it, solely for their own good—to whom even kings and all in subordination to them, are strictly speaking, servants and not masters.” (Samuel Adams Writings)

Over and over again, the founders expressed the theme that *the government that governs best, governs least*. The first attempt at national government, The Articles of Confederation and Perpetual Union in 1777, proved to be a disaster, almost costing them the war and the peace.



Subsequently, in 1787, our constitution [the fulfillment of the promise for independence] was written and submitted.

### Suggestions for Study

- What does the statement ‘government that governs best governs least’ mean? How does this relate to us today?