

## How we will get from here to there: a Freedom manual

The only way to save our republic is for men and women of faith and conscience to unite under the banner of freedom. We must create a political organization that will rally Americans around the Constitution and help them gain for themselves the desire to reestablish it as the law of the land and the foundation of a just and moral government.

To date our efforts have been too little and too ineffective. That must change. A thousand separate groups proclaiming the Constitution simply cannot be effective. The Constitution Party must be revitalized with the time and talents of millions of new members, all of whom have made a commitment to serve regularly and diligently. They must be educated so that they may have a thorough understanding of the Constitution. They must be trained to participate in the political process and to invite and recruit others. They must learn to work together in a common cause. The leaders of the Constitution Party must identify the unique talents and abilities of each member so that they may be put to good use in restoring the Constitution.

Washington put it this way:

“A primary object should be the education of our youth in the science of government. In a republic, what species of knowledge can be equally important? And what duty more pressing ... than ... communicating it to those who are to be the future guardians of the liberties of the country.”

What sort of people will bring America back? They will come from every race, every income bracket, every religion, every political philosophy, and every walk of life. Many will have never served to cause before, and doing so will be new to them. All should become better men and women through their involvement with this great work. Not only will they become more knowledgeable and better informed citizens; they will improve their lives through their active involvement in the cause of freedom.

Two thousand four hundred years ago great Athenian general Thucydides delivered a famous funeral oration in which he talked about the kind of man who offered up his life for his country:

“For there is justice in the claim that steadfastness in his country's battles should be as a cloak to cover a man's other imperfections; since the good action has blotted out the bad, and his merit as a citizen more than outweighed his demerits as an individual.

“But none of these allowed either wealth with its prospect of future enjoyment to unnerve his spirit, or poverty with its hope of a day of freedom and riches to tempt him to shrink from danger. No, holding that vengeance upon their enemies was more to be desired than any personal blessings, and reckoning this to be the most glorious of hazards, they joyfully determined to accept the risk, to make sure of their vengeance, and to let their wishes wait; and while committing to hope the uncertainty of final success, in the business before them they thought fit to act boldly and trust in themselves. Thus choosing to die resisting, rather than to live submitting, they fled only from dishonour, but met danger face to face, and after one brief moment, while at the summit of their fortune, escaped, not from their fear, but from their glory.

In other words, though these men who died for Greece had their faults and imperfections, as we all do, in devoting and ultimately in giving their lives for something greater than themselves they set an example for all who love freedom. Thucydides addresses the survivors of the great battle and the families of the fallen:

"So died these men as became Athenians. You, their survivors, must determine to have as unflinching a resolution in the field, though you may pray that it may have a happier

issue. And not contented with ideas derived only from words of the advantages which are bound up with the defence of your country, . . . you must yourselves realize the power of Athens, and feed your eyes upon her from day to day, till love of her fills your hearts; and then, when all her greatness shall break upon you, you must reflect that it was by courage, sense of duty, and a keen feeling of honour in action that men were enabled to win all this, and that no personal failure in an enterprise could make them consent to deprive their country of their valour, but they laid it at her feet as the most glorious contribution that they could offer.

You might ask yourself whether anyone could feel that way today about their country, or about freedom, or about anything else. My answer is that all of us can if we are invited to do so and if we can catch the vision of what we may bring to pass. We need to be much more than flag-wavers; we need to stand up for what is right and restore hope in every American heart. We can only do so if we comprehend the value of the freedom others are discarding.

We need to build a group of people who know what freedom is and are willing to work for it. It will mean sacrifice, hard work, and all that is good in us. We will experience discouragement, frustration, humiliation, and even occasional defeat. In the end, no matter the ultimate outcome, we will have given our time, talents, and resources in the service of a cause next to godliness we will have clothed ourselves with respect for all men compassion virtue and charity as we have labored to make all Americans free.

Are we up to the task? Can we succeed? We are, and we can, if we are united. We must overcome petty differences. We must stay away from partisan wrangling. We must be exemplary in our conduct, for we seek to attract to our cause people who live that way themselves.

We must not allow ourselves to sink to the level of today's selfish grasping for power. We seek to free men, not to bind them to false hopes and empty promises.

We are late to the battle. We have allowed Americans to lose their understanding of the Constitution and we have not required that our children be taught its principles. Our only hope is in helping Americans believe in freedom once again so that they will work for it. If we are content to sit in the recliner with a beer and the remote we will fail.

### Walking a tightrope

We are walking a tightrope. If we preach the Constitution as it was originally drafted – and much of our effort will be in that context – we will be attacked for being out-of-date, behind the times, uninformed, and incapable of dealing with the world today. None of this is true, but it is the way politics is conducted and it will do damage. We will be attacked on the basis that the Constitution is a “living” document, one that must be changed to meet the needs of the people in our day. If we continue to press for the “strict construction” argument the response will be to do away with the Constitution altogether. This we simply cannot afford. We are already headed in that direction because of the many who want our government to be dissolved into a “one world” government. We are under ever greater pressure to abandon our sovereignty and submit to the unelected “government” of the world’s elites.

We cannot afford to allow ourselves to be isolated and marginalized by those who have the loudest voices and the greatest influence. We also cannot passively stand by, signing petitions and attending Tea Parties. We must be actively involved in defending our Constitution.

We are also walking a different kind of tightrope. There are many Americans who believe in a version of the Constitution different from the one we currently have. I refer to the Libertarians, those who believe that the Constitution guarantees them the freedom to engage in any activity

that does not harm someone else. The Libertarian approach, as I understand it, is basically amoral in that it does not take a stand on issues like homosexuality, abortion, and illegal drugs. However, when confronted with those issues, the Libertarian fallback position seems to permit all those behaviors, both legal and illegal, because of their definition of victimless crimes.

This approach is very dangerous to the Constitution. I believe that many Libertarians will not support a “strict construction” approach to the Constitution because they 1) believe in rights in addition to natural rights, 2) do not have morality as the underlying principle of their beliefs, and 3) are willing to “go with the flow” on many issues instead of standing up for important principles.

I want to believe that many Libertarians will join with us in our efforts because they actually do support the principles of morality and decency, but they must be sought out and recruited. We cannot expect their help unless they are willing to abandon Libertarianism and cleave to the Constitution itself. If they will not, we will find them abandoning us at key moments.

## Education

We need to proceed on multiple levels simultaneously:

1. Educate ourselves regarding the principles of freedom, the Declaration of Independence, the Constitution, and the writings of the Founding Fathers.
2. Educate our children. Give them hope. Set a positive example for them by our participation in our community, schools, and churches. Teach them that the way the world is today is not desirable for our happiness, and that we can be a positive influence for good. Help them understand how they can distinguish between what they see and hear from their friends, the media, the government, and all that they do in life, and what is of real value and importance both to them and their children.
3. Work with the teachers’ unions and show their leaders the damage that has been done by allowing freedom to be dropped from the curriculum in American public schools. Millions of American public school teachers do not agree with the policies of the NEA or the Department of Education – you probably know some who do not. Millions more teachers can see the results of decades of effort to replace rigorous academic standards with teachings on situation ethics, gender choice, condom use, and tolerance, all of which have contributed to today’s extremely high dropout rates and the functional illiteracy of many who do survive and graduate.
4. Work with our local school districts to help them find ways to get around the Department of Education and NEA agendas without losing essential Federal support so that they may re-establish high academic standards and the teaching of principles like the duties and responsibilities of citizenship, the importance of moral conduct and integrity to the functioning of society, and more.

Those who are involved in this movement need to be confident in their knowledge and understanding. They need to be well grounded in the Constitution and the writings of the Founding Fathers. Only then can they be effective teachers and leaders, for they know what they know. We are not preaching the Gospel; if we were, we would be visited with more contention than we would wish. Instead, we “preach” freedom. In these days helping others to become “converted” may be just as difficult for the one as it is for the other.

## Political Activism

We must be organized. We must have a national organization that solicits the input of its chapters and members and decides which issues must be addressed in the coming timeframes. The national organization must decide how to approach each issue, where the battles must be fought, and how we can win. Once those decisions have been made the support of each member and chapter should be solicited and plans drawn up that will involve each of us.

### How do we Portray Ourselves?

In every public expression made by members of this organization we must occupy the moral high ground and hold it. In addition, we must be kind, patient, persuasive, well-informed – and long-suffering. We dare not stoop to the level of our opponents, for when we do we lose by default.

“I may not agree with what you say, but I will defend to the death your right to say it”. I think that homily may have gotten lost. We are supposed to be “the good guys”; we are the people who want to bring respect, decency, civility, integrity, and morality back to the national debate. Of course there will always be those who are ignorant, misinformed, downright stupid, holding fast to uninformed opinions, and just plain haters of everything that is good - but if they are American citizens they have the right to say what they wish.

How much better might it be if someone were to sit down one-on-one with those individuals who oppose us, show them our position paper and the Constitution we love and defend, and see if they won't change their minds. People do change their minds, you know. There are many who are not so conditioned in their responses that they can no longer distinguish black from white. If they won't change, and if they persist in opposing the principles of freedom, they make themselves the type of people who will accomplish little of value in this life, and who will be forgotten in death. We don't have to concern ourselves with them, but we may need to repair the damage they do.

How can we fight politically correct speech if we too wish to restrict speech of any type? How can we legally suppress dissent without becoming autocrats?

Or, as I said during the Bush administration, when we engage in torture (speaking of Guantanamo Bay and Iraq) we become our own worst enemy.

Please let us hold to the standards of the Founding Fathers we revere. Or maybe we need to be good Christians and turn the other cheek. You decide . . .

For decades the Left has made conservatives look like fools because they took a “holier than thou” air and mocked us. They made the world believe that they had superior minds and superior ideas. We let them do so because we were disorganized, and had never conceived of having to defend the foundational principles of morality and decency on which our lives were based. We allowed pornography because they said it was “free speech”. We allowed abortion because they said it was “a choice”. We allowed gay marriage because they said we were denying them their rights. *They* have been applying all the labels. *They* have controlled the dialogue. *They* have made the accusations of racism, bigotry, war-mongers, empire builders, and every other epithet - all to put us at a disadvantage and elevate themselves to the [immoral] high ground.

They have had their day in the sun. Their programs and ideas are as bankrupt as the countries they took over. Liberalism has so dominated the media, public education, the halls of Congress, the courts, and the public dialogue that we have not yet begun to turn the corner and reveal the true face of socialism. That day will come, but not as a result of us soiling ourselves with the same mud they have been throwing.

If we do not choose the battleground, but let them choose it instead, we will continue to lose. If we descend to their level of vulgarity, dishonesty, immorality, and empty promises we are no better than them.

I believe we *must* set the example of truth, fair play, decency and civility. I could not participate in tactics like those used by the Left. Remember, their methods have infected Democrats and Republicans alike. Even the Libertarians seem to have been seduced into a corruption of their basic beliefs regarding victimless crimes to tacit approval of the horrors of abortion and the destructive effects of immorality.

Personally, I will not lie, cheat, nor steal to defend the Constitution. I will not defame nor attempt to defame another because his beliefs (or his public outbursts) are meant to discredit me. I will speak the truth as I understand it, and teach others a love of liberty. I will teach them the principles Americans seem to have lost, of the right to liberty and property, of the right to work hard to obtain a living without a massive bureaucracy critiquing their every move. I will teach that all men are equal under the law, that they may exercise freedom of conscience, and that they will be held responsible for their actions.

If we speak with the voice of reason, of kindness, and of charity, we will the more effectively silence those who rail on us. Their noise will be seen as foolishness, and their preaching will ring as hollow as it really is.

I can't feel more strongly about this. I can think of two incidents during his mortal ministry when the Savior exercised righteous indignation, and in both instances he cleansed the Temple - literally His Father's house. On no occasion did he ever lift his hand to curse a human being - that condemnation was reserved for a fig tree. Rather, he taught that we should love our enemies, bless those who curse you, and pray for them which spitefully use you, and persecute you. He then told us why that was so important (Matthew 5:45-47). If we act as our detractors do, *ours is the greater sin*. Why? Because we know better. Do we really want to be the Pharisees?

It is always a hard thing to stand on higher ground. On my bathroom mirror I keep a small laminated card I made. The background is in shades of gray to indicate the nature of this life. The text asks a simple question: *Am I a man the Lord can trust?* I try each day to show in the way I live the appropriate answer to that question.

Let me make it a little easier. You will catch more flies with honey than with vinegar. We want to recruit into our ranks those who can carry in their hearts the spark of freedom that motivated our Founding Fathers. If you read the commentaries of those assembled in the Constitutional Convention you will be amazed at how they declared their astonishment at how men of strong opinions set aside their beliefs and ideas in favor of something bigger and more important than themselves. The miracle of the Constitution is that a group of men were able to establish a wonderful Constitution *almost in spite of themselves*.

The people who got us into this mess are not the ones who will get us out. We do not need those who are bound to a defunct and rotting political philosophy, nor those who must be bribed into every action they take. We need to educate the people of these United States about the true meaning of freedom, so that they may choose for themselves whether they truly want - and deserve - that government of the people, by the people, and for the people we are trying to help them create. We will drive them away and they will refuse to listen if our voices are as strident and critical as those who stand against us.

Americans need to know:

The Constitution is the most important legal document ever produced by any group of individuals because it limits the power of central government and guarantees certain freedoms to the citizens of the nation it created.

The Constitution is as viable today as it was in 1787. Its usefulness as the foundation of our republic is unchanged.

Americans have allowed themselves to be seduced by the appeal of “getting something for nothing” from their government.

The federal government today does not honor, support or sustain the Constitution.

Significant change is required if we are to restore the United States to its Constitutional foundation.

That change will not be without pain or difficulty, because many who have received benefits “from the public trough” will see those benefits cease.

Those who love freedom and the Constitution are not radicals nor anarchists. Likewise, they are not socialists. They are people like you and me who love this country and want to see it fulfill its potential as a free land offering opportunity to all who are willing to work hard and live moral, decent lives.

The American people have nothing to fear from the TPP or the Constitution Party. What we strive to achieve is what people throughout history have longed for.

Restoring the Constitution to its rightful place in our government will help Americans become far more compassionate and charitable. It will help us to put in their place those who would perform “social engineering” and impose “shock and awe” in an effort to make us forget the blessings of freedom.

The Constitution as originally framed and amended through the years will need some modifications to brought back into line with the intention of the Founding Fathers in light of today’s environment. Some of the amendments need to be strengthened and some repealed. Certain aspects of government and of society need to be held in check to avoid a tyranny of the minority. These changes include prohibiting the judiciary from “legislating from the bench” and dictating our moral code; preventing Presidents from drafting Executive Orders which are given the force of law; of fixing the system of campaign contributions which is so prone to abuse; of reducing and eliminating hundreds of thousands of jobs in the federal bureaucracy which were created through unconstitutional legislation, and more. The activities of lobbying groups must be fully disclosed. No agency or branch of government must ever be permitted to lobby another.

These changes cannot be dictated from above, for no one in a position of power ever wants to change the status quo unless it will expand his or her authority and power. They must come through the legal process of public debate, seeking of consensus, and action by legislators as informed by their constituents. Unfortunately, with the current low level of understanding of Constitutional principles among the American people in our day and the strident voice of those who stand in opposition to those principles, we are not now prepared to engage in such a debate. If we did, the principles of freedom would lose.

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Many people have written at length about the problems facing our country today. Some of them profit handsomely from their writing. Although each of them usually has a few pages at the end of the book about the "solution", none of them have seemed willing to devote time, resources, and energy to effect in that or any other solution.

I believe that if we are to save this country we must begin immediately to recruit and train those who believe - or can learn to believe - in our inspired Constitution and come to its rescue at a time when it is rapidly being phased out in favor of a socialist/welfare state.

"The creed of our democracy is that liberty is acquired and kept by men and women who are strong and self-reliant, and possessed of such wisdom as God gives mankind -- men and women who are just, and understanding, and generous to others -- men and women who are capable of disciplining themselves. For they are the rulers and they must rule themselves."

--*Franklin D. Roosevelt, 10/28/44*

I believe the only a national organization with strong leadership can stand up to our elected officials and begin to move the pendulum back in the direction of the Constitutional guarantees of freedom our Founding Fathers had in mind.

My "vision" of this project involves these elements:

1. Member recruitment
2. Member education and training
3. Fund-raising
4. Political activism
5. Candidate recruitment and training
6. Expansion across the country
7. Local and national media campaign, and
8. Lobbying

Each of those things is part of the whole, and little can be accomplished if any one of them fails. A group like the Tea Party Patriots can do most but not all of the things on this list. Only a political party can do everything on the list. Let's look at each of them in more detail.

### Member Recruitment

I remember vividly experience in Philadelphia many years ago. I was with a group of people, all of them American citizens, and a man dressed up as Benjamin Franklin was addressing us. At one point our national anthem began to play from some speakers, and my wife and I were the only people in the room who stood up. The man playing the part of Benjamin Franklin, who had been standing as he addressed us, had to ask the rest of the group to please rise for the national anthem.

These were Americans like you and me who were interested in American history and who wanted to know more about it. These families were raising their children to be good citizens. They chose to attend that presentation in part because they love this country, and yet they failed to either recognize or acknowledge our national anthem. If they had been at a baseball game undoubtedly all of them would have stood immediately – though perhaps only because the announcer asked everyone to stand for the playing of the national anthem.

Patriotism seems “so last century” these days. We often act as if we are ashamed of our country, and perhaps there are good reasons for feeling that way. We should be ashamed that America

projects military might into more than 125 countries around the world, for we have no business being in those countries “protecting American interests”. America should be the world’s business partner and pay in full for what we receive from outside our borders. If we have a sound currency all the world will sell to us. We have no right to attempt to disrupt the government of any country to suit our purposes, nor to use “the big stick” to force compliance with our doctrines whether they are morally and ethically defensible or not.

We should be ashamed that one of America’s primary exports to the world is not freedom but Hollywood with all its filth and immorality. We should be particularly ashamed that America has undermined its own moral foundation by legalizing abortion, sexual promiscuity, sexual perversion, and the right of the state to step in and break up families deemed dysfunctional by the state. Worse, we are trying diligently to force those evils upon the rest of the world, as witness America’s efforts at the United Nations regarding the “rights” of children and all women’s rights to freely available abortion. This is far from the Founder’s vision of what America should represent to the world.

In many ways the image America portrays to its citizens and to outsiders is reprehensible. We must not focus on the way things are today, however; our task is to make the future better. If we can awaken in the American people the decency most of them possess and help them to stand up to judges who legislate morality from the bench and a Congress that seizes power through enslaving its constituents we may once again have an America we can be proud of. We have no reason to be proud of being a bully or advancing an empty and immoral philosophy as we are and do today.

It may take a long time for the pendulum to reverse and move back toward the Constitution, but if Americans can be reminded of their potential as individuals and as citizens we can make great strides. Many Americans know that much is wrong in America today, but they are unaware of the magnitude of the problem and are not organized to create effective change. Americans are encouraged by their government to apply for as many benefits as possible, for this is the way in which government enslaves us.

The appeal of the welfare state is ever with us. We hear it every day of our lives. We need to hear the voice of freedom proclaimed across the land; we need to be called into action to save our Republic from those who would destroy it. The cry of Freedom needs to be heard in every home, school, factory, church, shop, and office, and a banner raised to which men and women of conscience may rally. Our government demands little of us today, and we respond by becoming smaller and smaller people with reduced hopes and expectations. By raising the flag of freedom we will ask Americans to take on a great cause which will require their best efforts. The only way they will respond favorably is if they can see that victory is possible. To encourage people to leave our spiritual and moral Babylon we must show them the city on the hill which is a light unto all nations.

Americans become more patriotic when our nation is threatened. We become more civic minded when our immediate family is threatened by things that are going on in our local community. Like most people, getting involved is usually inconvenience and takes us away from the things that we would rather be doing, and for this reason Americans are considered to be great "joiners" but relatively poor active participants.

Because of this attitude - and it is by no means unique to Americans - we tend to "let things slide" when we don't feel that our current situation is threatened. Our enemies, both internal and external have discovered that tendency and capitalized on it. For decades Americans have been taught little in the public schools about the Constitution and the wisdom of the founding fathers. Instead, we have been fed a steady stream of information about what is wrong with our Constitution, with capitalism, with free enterprise, and so on. Bad legislation is written into law

because there is a little something in there for every congressman or senator whose vote is required for passage. That "little something" must be money or a project that the legislature or can bring back to the folks at home and show them that he's doing his job by grabbing a piece of the federal pie.

At the same time we have been fed all sorts of notions about rights, and how we have rights far above and beyond those guaranteed to us by the Constitution. Most Americans were comfortable with these new rights as long as they didn't directly impact our lifestyle. Just like the frogs in a frying pan full of water, we tend not to "jump out" as the water is heated because the rise in temperature is gradual. The American people should have jumped out of this "frying pan" years ago.

Because we have been absolutely inundated with liberal and socialistic ideas our public dialogue and even our way of thinking have been radically altered. Not too many years ago most Americans refused to take a handout from anyone; they were proud people, and would do whatever it took to get through a crisis. They were more honest, more faithful, and more knowledgeable regarding the blessings of freedom. Today we have allowed ourselves to become convinced that "the world owes us a living", and we happily accept handouts from our government. Little do we realize what a canker to the soul these handouts really are.

Many of us have convinced ourselves that we don't really receive any benefits from the government; all we do is pay our taxes and hope to get a small refund each year. Government today intrudes into every aspect of our lives, and all of us are feeding at the public trough in one way or another.

I believe the only way to change this is to educate the American people about their Constitution and the wisdom of the founding fathers. We don't all need to become Constitutional scholars, but we ought to be able to hold our own in defending the Constitution and recognizing when the acts of any branch of government violate it. Big Government becomes bigger when the people allow it to do so. Each new intrusion into our lives is met with a shrug; after all, the government is only looking out for our best interests – or is it?

How do we go about this educational process? We can't go to the public schools, for they are dominated by the liberal teachers' unions. We can't go to the public or the private universities, for most of them are hotbeds of liberalism and radical thought.

We need to go to the people directly. We need to find those who are dissatisfied with our government and ask them to join our movement. It is not enough to ask people to sign a petition, or even to make a contribution to a political candidate or a political action committee. Doing something like that may give the individual a brief feeling of having done something worthwhile, but it doesn't last and it doesn't make that person any better a person. It's more like the brief euphoria that certain illegal drugs can produce; it doesn't change anything except to impoverish the user and make him even more dependent.

We need to hold regular meetings of whatever national group we belong to, and in those regular meetings introduce and welcome newcomers. Every member of the group should be encouraged to bring someone else to the next meeting.

Each member should sign a written pledge that details the purposes of the organization. By signing that pledge and by taking an oath that individual agrees to become more actively involved as a citizen in the political process. We need to ask three things of him or her; time, talents, and resources. For example, each member should be asked to contribute \$100 per year to the organization, and perhaps \$150 for a married couple and \$200 for an entire family. If necessary, these contributions can be made using automatic bank drafts, or the organization should accept credit cards.

Each member should commit a minimum of one hour per week to the cause. During that time the member would study and learn about the Constitution and the issues of the day, learn how to recruit people into the organization, invite his friends, neighbors, and business associates to the organization's regular meetings, attend the regular meetings, and be involved in political activism. One hour per week is inadequate to accomplish all this, but it is a start.

Each member would complete a *Talents and Abilities Survey* detailing his experience, his hobbies, his education, and the things he likes to do as well as the things he does well. He or she should understand that there is a great need for trained leadership in the organization as well as dedicated and reliable candidates for political office.

There are many ways in which people may be recruited. Each member ought to be taught how to approach his neighbor, ask to be invited into the neighbor's home, and sit down with them and share his or her feelings about the Constitution and what we are trying to accomplish. That must be the most effective way of finding those who love freedom and who will be willing to defend it - once they know there is a national organization which has that as its primary purpose.

Recruitment can also take place when our friends and neighbors are invited to participate with us in Tea Parties and other political rallies, petition drives, and educational sessions. Some people will be reluctant to join the organization until they are convinced that we are supporting the principles of freedom rather than a particular party or candidate.

Statistically, if every member simply brought someone else with them to the next meeting, and if that person joined the organization, membership would double at each meeting. That will not happen, of course, and even if it did we would not have trained leadership in place to accommodate it. We must grow at a rapid but appropriate pace so that we may meet the needs of all our members.

## Fundraising

Fundraising is often frowned upon in organizations because the leaders are concerned it will drive away the members. That might be true in an organization that is not working on something worthwhile and understandable, but that is not the case with us. We have the example before us of the Founding Fathers, who were willing to sacrifice their lives, their fortunes, and their sacred honor in the defense of freedom. In a very real sense we ask that of our members, but we give them an opportunity to grow in the movement and strengthen their commitment as they continue to participate. We would hope that through their association with the organization they will gain a desire to participate more fully in this vital effort. Some can contribute time and talents, others money and some may be placed in a position to be of influence in critical moments.

Every member will know where his contributions go. There must always be full disclosure, not only to meet the requirements of the law, but to help members understand what their contributions are helping to accomplish.

\$100 a year isn't much, but for the kind of people we want to recruit it may be more than they contribute during the course of a year to anything except their church. Special contributions may be solicited from time to time, but the focus of our meeting should never be fundraising. For their \$100 each member should be given a membership card, which will serve as a reminder of the commitment they made.

I do not believe that we should ever attempt to raise funds outside of our membership. Rather, I believe that we should try to increase our membership rapidly and utilize the volunteers were ever possible in leadership positions in order to minimize the organization's expenses.

## Meetings

I believe that regular meetings are to be held, attendance taken, both annual membership fees and special contributions solicited, and training conducted to educate the members about the principles of the Constitution and the natural tendencies of those in authority to take power unto themselves. Only if we can defend the Constitution can we preserve it, for there are many who believe in a "living" Constitution and would gladly scrap in favor of one that contains many of the "rights" in place or being discussed today.

These monthly (or more frequent) meetings would run perhaps 90 minutes and be divided into three sections:

Training

Education

Business

### Training

In the Training section we would discuss ways to recruit new members. Specifically, I have it in mind that people should be trained to canvass their neighborhoods, ask if they may enter the homes of their neighbors, and invite their neighbors to come to a meeting of the Tea Party Patriots.

In the Training section we would also train current and future leaders of the organization regarding their duties and responsibilities. They need to know how to work with all types of people and to represent the organization properly.

Who would conduct the training? Those who have already received it, and who have demonstrated their ability to conduct it.

### Education

The Education portion of the meeting would include streaming video or DVDs produced under the direction of the national leadership of the TPP, and would include talks given by experts in various areas of the Constitution and experts on the issues of the day. Just as important, there ought to be reports given by members of the local group. This would be a lot like being back in school, for we would have homework. These reports could be book reviews or reports on assigned topics pertinent to the local area. The point is to give the members an opportunity to improve their public speaking skills and gain increased confidence in their ability to defend the Constitution.

Each member should be challenged to participate in a program of regular reading and study. It will be appropriate to provide a Recommended Reading list of books and articles for new members. Each local chapter could have its own schedule, and the Recommended Reading list could be prioritized. However, since we anticipate rapid growth of the organization, local needs will dictate the size of the list and the reading schedule.

It will be important to have members report on their reading. It is true that you cannot effectively teach something you do not fully understand. Getting a book report helps develop public speaking abilities and enables members to gain confidence in their knowledge and understanding of the Constitution.

### Business

The Business section of the meeting would include a commitment or pledge made by each member. Nothing works unless people are willing to make a commitment and keep it. Today,

hundreds of thousands of people who love the Constitution are asking themselves "What next?". This is what's next: the opportunity to get involved in an organization that has a mission statement, a purpose, and specific goals toward which it is working. I am absolutely certain that at least 1 million Americans, despite the current economic crisis, will be willing to make a financial commitment of, say, \$50 per year and one hour a week of their time.

The Business section would also involve planning for political activism similar to what is already happening, but greatly expanded as this movement gains momentum. Each local "chapter" would be assigned the responsibility of maintaining contact with the local media, including press conferences (where appropriate), Letters to the Editor, interviews on radio and TV, and, of course, the Tea Parties.

As this organization grows, with strong leadership and with members who are growing every day in their confidence about the Constitution, exciting things will begin to happen. At some point the media will no longer be able to label us as they have been, for they will have to take us seriously. I don't think it's impossible that the Constitution might even be taught in the public schools once again; we could certainly help to make that happen. As far as what's going on every day in Washington, we need to focus much more public attention on the 10th amendment, States' Rights, and the unconstitutionality of almost all the legislation being passed by the Congress and signed by the President.

In conjunction with the Tea Party Patriots we might want to form alliances with both the Constitution Party, which runs candidates who are committed to the Constitution and the intentions of the Founding Fathers, and the National Center for Constitutional Studies (NCCS). One wonderful thing it would be to help them to expand their efforts to address groups all over the country and teach the principles of the Constitution.

### Typical Meetings

On a regular basis, two meetings should be held. One is the Executive Committee meeting, which is a business meeting in which the functioning of the organization is discussed and decisions made. In this meeting:

1. Candidates for office in the organization will be proposed, discussed, and decided upon.
2. Organization finances will be reviewed and decisions made regarding incoming and outgoing funds.
3. Fundraising will be discussed and projections made based upon current efforts.
4. Recruiting will be discussed and ways found to encourage members to bring more of their friends to meetings.
5. The agenda for the upcoming monthly regular meeting will be discussed and approved.
6. Training of leaders will be reviewed and appropriate decisions made.
7. The current education program will be reviewed and progress reported. Appropriate changes will be decided upon.
8. Key issues will be raised and decisions made regarding items of local interest being submitted to the national organization.
9. The campaign for action being sent from the national organization will be reviewed and discussed, and fitted to the local chapter and its members.
10. Political activism will be discussed and upcoming events considered or planned to promote the message.

The other meeting is the regular monthly meeting, divided into three 30-minute segments. The first segment should be Training, during which those who are attending a meeting for the first time may be directed to the Introductory class. In this class the basic principles of the Constitution will be taught, along with the writings of the Founding Fathers.

The second segment should be Education, at which all present will participate in the current class. These classes will have homework, including reading books and articles, participating in political activism, contacting elected officials, and discussing Constitutional principles with neighbors, friends, and co-workers. The classes should be taught on a rotating basis so that everyone gets a regular opportunity to teach. Teaching a class requires that the teacher be well prepared, and will promote teaching and leadership skills that are vital to the organization.

Classes will include discussions of books read by assignment, writings of "experts" on issues of the day, and other important matters of interest. The goal is education rather than debate, but the Education portion of the meeting will be held at a higher level than the Basic course taught during the Training portion.

There will be lectures given by people at the National level (on streaming video or DVD) as well as from local members who have expertise in the various areas, but these lectures should not dominate the meeting or prevent all from participating in a meaningful way.

The Business portion of the meeting should be the last portion. At this time those who are willing to take the pledge will do so and make a real commitment to the cause of freedom. This should be handled with dignity and consideration, for each participant is important. Those not yet ready to make a commitment are welcome to sit in on the Business portion of the meeting to show that we have nothing to hide, and that what we are doing is intended to benefit all Americans by helping them appreciate freedom and natural rights.

In the Business portion announcements will be made regarding actions of the Executive committee. All members will be asked to sustain the decisions of the Executive Committee, and discussion will be permitted as appropriate. We must include all and alienate none both so that we may speak with one voice and that we may respect the worth of each member.

## Lobbying

Today, lobbying is the way things get done in Washington. That must be changed, because much of government centers around influence peddling and significant pressure on our elected officials from special interest groups, all of them seeking preferential treatment. Just about every industry in the country has its own lobbying organization. Many express their wishes in the campaign contributions they make, and those who are elected because of those contributions are beholden to them.

This organization will need to lobby as well, and I believe much of our effort will be toward convincing our elected officials of the constitutionality (or lack thereof) of the legislation they are currently considering. If we can just "hold their feet to the fire" and make them realize that there are people in the United States who will hold them accountable for the observance of their oath of office, we should be able to effect some changes.

Since we are concerned with national issues, I believe it would be appropriate for a means to be devised whereby the ideas and opinions of members might be solicited. In this way leaders of the organization can be guided in their lobbying efforts, and devote appropriate time and resources to important issues. If we are trying to restore a truly representative government, our organization ought to function in a similar manner.

## Organizational growth

Many organizations die because they grow too quickly. The same happens with corporations. Training of members and leaders in the organization will have a very high priority as long as the organization exists.

It is true that new chapters ought to be added frequently, but those chapters should not be formed until they can be self-sufficient. They must have trained leadership in place who are familiar with the programs and mission statement of the organization and can make sure that the work is carried out properly and effectively. Otherwise, we will open the door to people who do not necessarily share our beliefs and our purposes, and can see whole chapters stolen away through debate, dissension, and misunderstanding.

Just because there are enough members in an area to justify creating their own chapter does not give an automatic green light to create that chapter.

### Dealing with disagreement

We are all different and have different ideas. When conflicts arise we need to remind ourselves of how much we have in common. We need to consider the points of agreement between us and the cause in which we are engaged.

## The Pledge

I, \_\_\_\_\_, solemnly pledge my support to the Constitution Party for the purpose of helping to restore America to its Constitutional foundation. I believe in freedom. I want to help my country promote the values of faith, hard work, morality, integrity and decency which can make it great.

As evidence of my pledge I will commit my time, talents, and resources to this great work. I will encourage others to become involved so that we may work together. I will unite my efforts with those of all faiths, creeds and colors who desire to see America restored to greatness and who will raise the flag of freedom to all the nations of the world.

With the Founding Fathers I pledge my life, my fortune, and my sacred honor.

## The Commitment

Taking the Pledge makes a person a member of this movement. He or she will then begin to contribute \$100 per year and one hour per week to it. Some will immediately take the ball and run with it; others will need encouragement and help in living up to their promise. We need to act with wisdom and compassion to help all progress, for all are needed and all can make their own unique contribution.

## The Process

Upon taking the Pledge, which should normally be done in the Business portion of a regular meeting, the new member will receive a specific assignment. He or she will be assigned to the New Member class to begin or complete the course before moving on to the more advanced classes. Prior to taking the Pledge the new member should have completed the Talents and Abilities Survey and been interviewed by a local leader. In that interview the leader and the prospective member will discuss the information on the Survey and determine where in the movement the new member should initially serve. Assignment will include committee memberships, teaching, organizing political activism, recruiting, and more.

## Fulfilling our Potential

We need not think in terms of whether we will succeed or fail. If we awaken just one person – ourselves – to the idea that we make ourselves free by our own efforts we will have succeeded. Participation in this movement will make people better. It will remind them of the duties of citizenship.

Throughout their history Americans have been famous for their religious faith, their hard work and diligence, their belief in the importance of improving themselves, their compassion and generosity, and the notion that we can be a great people. Though we have allowed ourselves to seek for lesser goals, many Americans still hold to the principles promoted by the Founding Fathers; it's just that many of them do not realize it, and many others believe that there is no political will to promote those things that made America great.

Millions of Americans will welcome the challenge to become better and to create something better than the status quo. We are still a people who possess faith in the future and we have not lost the drive and initiative that once made us great. We must never doubt that we can return to our inspired Constitution. What once occurred through divine intervention can happen again through the same means. What we have to do is to help our fellow men and women become

worthy of that miracle. We must deserve our freedom or we will lose it. Even if we deserve it freedom can be stolen from us through apathy and inaction on the part of the people in response to the unconstitutional actions of their elected officials. Allowing the many special interest groups and those who favor taking away our freedoms to establish a tyranny of the minority is not worthy of us. We must work very hard to reverse these tyrannies if we are to restore our freedoms.

Restoring America to its Constitutional foundation is worthy of the best in us. Aside from raising our family and instilling in our children a profound respect for the Constitution, one of the most important things we can do in life is to preserve those things we believe are given us by God. Clearly, the Constitution is one of the very few things worth fighting for. As we engage in this vital work we will become better people. We will gain skills that will benefit us in every aspect of life. We will gain confidence in the future and lose the feeling of powerlessness from which so many Americans suffer. We will live better lives; we will be more honest, more chaste, more considerate in making decisions, more temperate, and more inclined to follow the Golden Rule.

As we work to defend the Constitution we cannot help but look upon all men as brothers, for we will understand that under the law we are all equals. We do not live under the Constitution so that we may take advantage of one another; we live under this Constitution so that all may enjoy the blessings of freedom and prosper in accordance with his own God-given talents, abilities, and hard work.

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