

Ideals of Democracy

Limited Government

Limited Government is the idea that a government has *limits* and boundaries that they cannot cross. In the U.S., the *Constitution* limits the government's power and protects the rights and liberties of the people through principals. The Bill of Rights specifically lists *Civil Liberties* the people have such as the right to free speech or protection against unlawful search and seizure



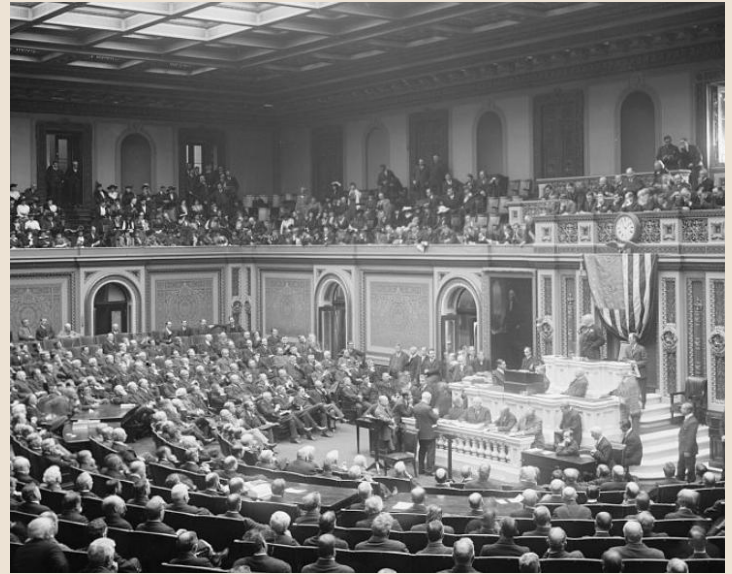
Popular Sovereignty

Popular Sovereignty is a principle that states that a government must have the **people's consent** before ruling. In the United States, citizens consent to a government by **voting** or even running as a candidate in elections or local positions. In addition, citizens can **propose laws** to their representatives in Congress. Only when the people can consent to their government can a government officially rule



Republicanism

Despite what most people think, the U.S. isn't a pure **democracy**. In a pure democracy, citizens directly vote on laws. Instead, what we have is a **Republic**: a different form of a democracy in which citizens **vote** for a **representative** in Congress who votes and creates laws and the president who approves laws, appoints officials, and runs the military. The Founding Fathers believed that important government decisions should be placed in people who had expertise in the knowledge.



Natural Rights

Philosopher John *Locke* inspired many of the ideals that the Founding Fathers put into the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution. John Locke claimed that every person was born with rights given automatically by *nature*. He said each person inherently had the right to *life, liberty, and property*. Although the Founding Fathers change our natural rights to be life, liberty, and *pursuit of happiness*.



Social Contract

John Locke also proposed the Social Contract, the idea that the government's job is to protect the citizen's civil **rights and liberties**, but the citizen's duty, as a result, is to follow the government's **law**. If the people didn't follow the law, the government could **take away** certain rights and liberties, but if the government didn't protect innocent citizen's rights and liberties, then the people could create a revolution to **overthrow** the government

