

Principles of Sovereignty

By

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Many people – on all sides of the issue – have been consumed with the: ‘Who’, ‘why’, and ‘how’ of the events on 9/11, but some fifteen years later those questions are not foremost on my mind. Instead, I am concerned with what the events of 9/11 have set in motion with respect to the systematic stripping of rights, freedoms, and sovereignty that occurred in relation to American citizens, not to mention the millions of individuals who were adversely affected elsewhere in the world due to the collateral damage that ensued due to the forces given expression through the events of 9/11.

Americans – as well as individuals and communities elsewhere in the world -- have been swindled out of sovereignty by an array of scoundrels both known and unknown. America has become a failed nation because none of its essential institutions -- such as the three branches of federal government, the military, the Federal Reserve Bank, the media, and academia -- have, for the most part, done anything to prevent tyranny, oppression, and injustice from conducting a blitzkrieg of America, as well as communities elsewhere in the world.

While the events of 9/11 helped pave the road to the foregoing sort of dissolution, the problem actually began more than 225 years ago with the coup d'état that was set in motion in the summer of 1787 in Philadelphia when a group of people -- sometimes referred to as the ‘Founding Fathers’ or ‘Framers’ -- decided to swindle Americans out of the opportunity to work toward establishing something that was far better than a republic or a democracy. Those individuals helped to establish a republic, and, unfortunately, almost from the very beginning, they began to betray the idea of a republic by failing to live in accordance with the moral principles of republicanism that are at the heart of the form of governance that was manipulated into existence through the process of ratification by the ‘Founding Fathers’ (For details concerning the foregoing claims, please refer to: *The Unfinished Revolution: The Battle for America’s Soul* as well as: *Democracy: Lost and Regained*).

From there, things went from bad to worse. The so-called ‘Founding Fathers’ -- especially James Madison who came up with the Virginia Plan that served as the template for the Constitution – were appalled by the idea of democracy because, among other things, that mode of government often tended to oppress minorities in order to appease majorities who were inclined to operate out of arbitrary, volatile perspectives. Indeed, it is important to understand that the mode of

government known as a republic is not at all synonymous with the notion of a democracy ... representative or otherwise.

However, by the mid-to-late 1790s, democracy had overrun republicanism as the form of governance that became dominant in America, and one of the signs of this transition was the formation of political parties ... something that was actually inconsistent with the moral principles of republicanism (enshrined in Article IV, section 4 of the Constitution) that required people in government to be impartial, objective, and unbiased in their deliberations and, therefore, indicates that belonging to a political party constitutes a conflict of interest with the moral duties of someone in government as far as the political philosophy of republicanism is concerned.

Relevant to the foregoing considerations is something that might be referred to as: The *Anaconda Principle*. This notion refers to the way in which most, if not all, governments engage in a process of increasingly and progressively squeezing the political, emotional, spiritual, social, educational, economic, and physical life out of citizens over a period of time. More specifically, each time the citizenry exhales in relief from having survived some arbitrary, unjustified, problematic exercise in public policy that was imposed on those citizens by government, the coils of power become wrapped even more tightly about the people through the next round of arbitrary and unjustified policies that are leashed upon the people.

Since 9/11, we have witnessed the introduction of: The Patriot Act (2001 – plus its reauthorization in 2005 that made many of its provisions permanent); The John Warner Authorization Act (2006); the Military Commissions Act (2006); as well as the National Defense Authorization Acts of 2010, 2011, 2012, 2013 and continuing on. In addition, there have been a slew of Executive Orders (e.g., 10990, 10995, 10997, 10998, 10999, 11000, 11001, 11002, 11003, 11004, 11005, 11921, and more) that authorize the government to control virtually every aspect of American society whenever the government deems this to be appropriate.

The Anaconda Principle is being applied ever more rigorously and persistently to the American people. In the process whatever constructive elements of republicanism and democracy that still were hanging on for dear life after several hundred years of abuse have been squeezed, for the most part, from political existence.

The following set of principles outline a possible social/political framework of self-governance that goes beyond the possibilities inherent in tyrannies, republics, and democracies. The time for change is upon us, and I believe that the kind of change to which I am alluding – monumental

though it might be – can be accomplished peacefully and without violence.

I invite you to reflect on the principles of sovereignty that are briefly noted below. Then, I invite you to reflect on the form of governance in existence today and compare it with the principles of sovereignty.

Sovereignty does not require force. It requires the broadening and deepening of one's understanding concerning the human condition, and when understood, sovereignty has a natural appeal to human beings because it reflects something that is integral to their own identity and sense of being human.

There is a significant difference between, on the one hand, the ways of republicanism, democracy or power and, on the other hand, the way of sovereignty. We each have a duty of care to carefully and critically reflect on the nature of the choices we might make with respect to the foregoing possibilities.

The following principles are in response to a question that someone once asked me – namely, "What is sovereignty?"

(1) Sovereignty is indigenous to, and inherent in, the potential of human beings. It is not derived from society or governments but, in fact, exists prior to, and independently of, the formation of society and governments.

(2) Sovereignty is the right to realize essential identity and constructive potential in ways that are free from techniques of undue influence (which seek to push or pull individuals in directions that are antithetical to the realization of sovereignty) but, as well, in ways that do not infringe on the like rights of others.

(3) Sovereignty entails the human capacity (and corresponding duties of care) to be able to push back the horizons of ignorance concerning the nature of reality.

(4) Sovereignty encompasses the right to the quality of food, shelter, clothing, education, and medical care that are minimally necessary to realize identity and constructive potential through the process of pushing back the horizons of ignorance.

(5) Sovereignty is rooted in the duties of care that are owed to others to ensure that those sovereignty rights are established, protected, and nurtured.

(6) Sovereignty is the right to choose how to engage the dynamics of: 'neither control, nor be controlled'.

(7) Sovereignty entails establishing local councils that constructively promote and develop principles of sovereignty and if necessary those councils would help mediate disputes that arise along the boundary dynamics involving the principle of: 'Neither control nor be controlled'. The composition, selection, and nature of the council would be similar to that of a grand jury.

In other words, council members would not be elected but chosen through an agreed-upon random-like process and, then, subject to a vetting process to determine the suitability of a given individual for taking on the responsibilities of the aforementioned council ... much like prospective jurors go through a voir dire process. In addition, the length of service would be for a limited time (6 months to a year) before new members would be selected through the sort of non-manipulated manner and vetting process that was noted earlier. Like a grand jury, the members of a local sovereignty council would be empowered to investigate whatever issues and problems seem relevant, but, unlike a grand jury, that council would have the authority to research issues, subpoena witnesses, and present their results directly to the community for further deliberation without having to go through the office of a prosecutor or attorney general.

(8) Sovereignty is the responsibility of individuals to work toward realizing their own individual sovereignty within a collective context that gives expression to the idea of sovereignty being writ large for the community as a whole.

(9) Sovereignty is rooted in economic activity that serves the principles of sovereignty, not vice versa. Corporations should be permitted to exist only as temporary charter arrangements devoid of any claims of personhood and they should be designed to serve specific purposes of value to both individual and collective sovereignty. Whatever profits accrue from corporate activity should be shared with the communities in which the corporation operates.

(10) The constructive value of money is a function of its role in advancing the principles of sovereignty for everyone. The destructive value of money is a function of the way it undermines, corrupts, and obstructs the principles of sovereignty.

Money acquires its value through the service it provides in relation to the establishment, enhancement, and protection of sovereignty. The money-generating capacity of banks should serve the purposes of sovereignty both individually and collectively. Banks should be owned and regulated by local communities as public utilities. Moreover, whatever

profits are earned in conjunction with bank activities should be reinvested in the community.

(11) Capital refers primarily to the constructive potential inherent in human beings and only secondarily to financial resources. The flow of capital (in both human and financial terms) should serve the interests of sovereignty, both individually and collectively.

(12) Sovereignty is not a zero-sum game. It is about co-operation, not competition.

(13) Sovereignty is rooted in the acquisition of personal character traits involving: Honesty, compassion, charitableness, benevolence, friendship, objectivity, equitability, tolerance, forgiveness, patience, perseverance, nobility, courage, kindness, humility, integrity, independence and judiciousness.

(14) Sovereignty is not imposed from the outside in but is realized from the inside out through struggle by the individual to come to grips with the meaning of the idea of: 'Neither control nor be controlled'.

(15) Sovereignty is rooted in struggling against: Dishonesty, bias, hatred, jealousy, greed, anger, selfishness, intolerance, arrogance, apathy, cowardice, egocentrism, duplicity, exploitation, and cruelty.

(16) Sovereignty is the process of struggling to learn how not to cede one's moral and intellectual agency to anything but: Truth, justice and character in the service of realizing one's identity, and constructive potential, as well as in the service of assisting others to realize their identity and constructive potential.

(17) Sovereignty can never be defended, protected, or enhanced by diminishing, corrupting, co-opting, or suspending the conditions necessary for the pursuit, practice, and realization of sovereignty. Sovereignty should not be subject to the politics of fear.

(18) Sovereignty is rooted in the principle that no person can represent the sovereign interests of another individual unless the sovereign interests of everybody are equally served at the same time.

(19) The activities and purposes of: Governments, nations, institutions, and corporations should always be capable of being demonstrated -- beyond a reasonable doubt -- to be the service of the sovereignty of the people, taken both collectively and individually.

(20) Sovereignty is rooted in the principle of de-centralization whenever doing so would serve the interests of sovereignty better than some form of centralization would be able to accomplish in a clearly demonstrable manner.

(21) Efficiency and wealth should be measured in terms that enhance the way of sovereignty, not the way of power.

(22) The principles of sovereignty should be rooted in the notion of sustainability, and those principles should not be pursued or realized at the expense of destroying the environment ... either with respect to the short term or in conjunction with the long term.

(23) Sovereignty is rooted in the cautionary principle. In other words, if there is a reasonable doubt about the safety, efficiency, judiciousness, or potential destructive ramifications of a given activity, then that activity should be suspended until a time when those doubts have been completely, successfully, and rigorously addressed.

(24) The defense of sovereignty is best served through the co-operation of de-centralized communities of sovereign individuals ... with only occasional, limited, and secondary assistance from centralized institutions and groups.

(25) Standing armies do not serve the interests of sovereignty but, rather, serve the interests of the bureaucracies that organize, fund, equip, and direct those standing armies. Being able to defend one's country and communities from physical attack does not require standing armies but, instead, requires sovereign individuals who understand the value of defending the principles of sovereignty that help a community and network of communities to flourish.

(26) The police should serve and protect both individual, as well as collective, sovereignty. The police should not be the guardians and enforcers of arbitrary laws that are designed to protect centralized governments, corporations, institutions, and other bodies that tend to operate in accordance with the way of power and, therefore, in opposition to the way of sovereignty.

(27) When done correctly, the practice of sovereignty creates a public space or commons that is conducive to the pursuit and realization of the principles of sovereignty by everyone who is willing to struggle toward that end.

(28) Sovereignty is rooted in the principle that the commons – that is, the resources of the Earth, if not the Universe – cannot be proven, beyond a reasonable doubt, to belong to anyone. Therefore, the commons should be shared, conserved, and protected by all of us rather than be permitted to be treated as individual, institutional, corporate, or government forms of private property.

(29) Whatever forms of private property are considered to be permissible by general consensus, that property should serve the

establishment, enhancement, and protection of the principles of sovereignty, both individual and collective.

(30) Aside from what is necessary to operate a business in an effective and productive manner, as well as what is necessary in the way of resources to be able to improve that business through research and development, and/or is necessary to provide a fair return for the employees of such a business for their collective efforts, then any profits that are generated by a business should be shared with the community or communities in which that business resides. The shareholders of a business should always be the entire community in which a business is located and not just a select number of private shareholders.

In exchange for foregoing kind of arrangement, there should be no taxes assessed in conjunction with businesses. At the same time, both businesses and the community become liable for whatever damages to individuals, the environment, or other parts of the community that are adversely affected by the activities of those businesses.

(31) A market in which all of its participants are not sovereign individuals is not a free market. Markets that exploit the vulnerabilities of participants are not free. Markets that are organized by the few in a way that undermines, corrupts, or compromises the principles of sovereignty are not free.

Markets in which the participants are all equally sovereign are free. Nonetheless, the freedom inherent in those markets should serve the interests of sovereignty for those who are both inside and outside of those markets.

(32) Sovereignty is only realizable when it is rooted in a collective, reciprocal, guarantee that we will all treat one another through the principles of sovereignty.

(33) Violations of sovereignty are an impediment to the full realization of the principles of sovereignty. However, those violations should not be primarily or initially be subject to punitive forms of treatment.

Instead, violations of sovereignty should be engaged through a process of mediated, conflict resolution and reconciliation intended to restore the efficacious and judicious functioning of sovereignty amongst both individuals and the collective. This mediated process is, first and foremost, rooted in a rigorous effort to determine the facts of a given situation before proceeding on with the process of mediation, conflict resolution, or reconciliation.

A community has the right to defend itself against individuals who violate, and show a disregard for, the sovereignty rights of other

individuals. The aforementioned right to self protection might assume the form of: Treatment, exile, incarceration, paroled supervision, community service, and other forms of negotiated settlement with respect to those who undermine the principles of sovereignty.

(34) Alleged scientific and technical progress that cannot be rigorously demonstrated beyond a reasonable doubt to enhance the pursuit and realization of principles of sovereignty by everyone is subject to being governed by the precautionary principle.

(35) Sovereignty is not a form of democracy in which the majority rules on any given issue. Rather, sovereignty is a process of generating consensus within a community that can be demonstrated, beyond a reasonable doubt, to serve the sovereignty interests of everyone.

(36) Sovereignty is rooted in the principle that with respect to any given practice, then, before making a community decision concerning that practice, then a community should take into consideration what the impact of that practice is likely to be on generations seven times removed from the current one.

(37) Everyone should underwrite the costs of pursuing, establishing, enhancing, realizing, and protecting sovereignty -- both individually and collectively -- according to his or her capacity to do so.

(38) Sovereignty is not a function of political maneuvering, manipulations, or strategies. Rather, sovereignty is a function of the application of: Reasoned discussion, critical reflection, constructive reciprocity, creative opportunities, and rigorous methodology in the pursuit of pushing back the horizons of ignorance and seeking to establish, enhance, realize, and protect sovereignty, both individually and collectively.

(39) Sovereignty is not about hierarchy or leadership. Advisors and technical consultants who are capable of lending their expertise and experience to a given project that serves the interests of sovereignty in a community are temporary facilitators whose responsibilities do not extend beyond a given project or undertaking. Those facilitators often tend to arise in the context of a given need and, then, are reabsorbed into the community when a given need has been met.

(40) Education should serve the interests of establishing, developing, enhancing and protecting the principles of sovereignty – both individually and collectively – and not serve the interests of the way of power. Education should not use techniques of undue influence that push or pull individuals toward accepting, or rejecting, specific philosophical, political, economic, or religious perspectives.

(41) To whatever extent taxes are collected (and the issue of taxes needs to be considered and justified – to the extent that this can be accomplished -- in a critically, rigorous fashion), those taxes should be assessed only on a local basis and only after all sovereignty needs of an individual for a given period of time have been addressed. Those taxes should be proportional -- within generally agreed upon specific limits -- to a person's capacity to pay those taxes without undermining a person's ability to fully pursue realizing the principles of sovereignty.

Whatever taxes are collected can only be used in conjunction with projects of which the individual taxpayer approves. Disputes concerning the issue of taxation should be handled through mediated discussions and not through punitive or coercive policies.

The foregoing statements of principle concerning the idea of sovereignty mark the beginning of the exploratory process, not the end. We all need to critically reflect on the foregoing set of principles because what we have today is working for just a very small number of individuals that follow the way of power and, as a result, seek to prevent people in general from being able to pursue, establish, enhance, realize, and protect the principles of sovereignty,

Sovereignty is not something new. The idea of sovereignty has been inherent in human beings for a very, very long time, but, unfortunately, as events have demonstrated again and again for thousands of years, people's aspirations for sovereignty have been thwarted persistently and rigorously by the way of power at nearly every juncture of history.

A person can commit one's moral and intellectual agency to the cause of sovereignty or an individual can cede that moral and intellectual agency to those who belong to the power elite – economically, militarily, socially, intellectually, politically, and religiously. A great deal hangs on the nature of the judgments one makes with respect to the issue of how one decides to cede one's moral, intellectual, and spiritual agency.