



Letters to the Editor

Are States Sovereign?

I am alarmed by the terminology many people use in their efforts to define the relationship between the federal and state governments. They talk and write about state sovereignty, and they quote our Founding Fathers as authority, but please read those quotes carefully and in context. Most of the quotes they use talk about powers, not sovereignty.

I do not believe that the states are sovereign. If the states are sovereign, then they are “supreme in power or authority,” have “undisputed ascendancy,” and have “independent authority.” If the states have sovereignty, then they have the “power to govern without external control,” and are the “supreme political power in a state.” Think carefully about what the word “sovereignty” means!

I believe that individual people are sovereign and that people delegate powers to governments. The people do not give up their sovereignty when they form governments. If states have sovereignty, then states determine which rights they give to (and can take away from) people. If the states are sovereign, then they cannot be held accountable for tyranny. We complain about the federal government, but what state government is not at least as oppressive as the federal government? If people really believe their states are sovereign, then they accept that their state has the “independent authority” to make any or all of their decisions for them.

In addition, although the delegates to the Constitutional Convention were sent from the states, no “state” adopted or ratified the U.S. Constitution. It is my understanding that ratification was done through special conventions where the people within the states’ boundaries chose representatives to vote for or against the Constitution. The federal government is not ultimately accountable to the states (especially now that states aren’t represented in the Senate). It is accountable to the people.

Contrary to what “state sovereignty” means, in relation to the federal government, states do not have supreme power. For example, in the U.S. Constitution, the states are specifically denied power to make treaties or alliances with other states or nations. The federal government has that supreme power over the states, as shown by its power and authority to call out the militia to put down insurrections.

The system of government we have is one where the people ratified the division of powers among their governments, best described as “separation of powers,” not “sovereignty.” The federal government has no authority from the people to act in many of the areas in which the states have authority to act, and vice versa. The people retained the right to hold all their governments accountable and the right to control their own lives as long as they do not infringe on the rights of others. The people are the “supreme political power” in our states and nation. *Individual people* are sovereign.

Misusing words may deceive people and diminish the knowledge they need to uphold freedom.

Eve Hatton

Sent via e-mail

Solid Source

G.A. Dupuis wrote a letter to the editor (March 7 issue) expressing surprise that after reading a TNA article rebutting a five-part series by Fox News called “The Right All Along: The Rise, Fall and Future of



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Conservatism," which condemned The John Birch Society, that he agreed with The New American. We should never completely rely on any network "news" station.

Most don't remember that during the '80s CNN was considered to be fair and unbiased, or lean toward a "conservative" point of view. Ted Turner was considered by some "conservatives" to be a knight in shining armor until he decided if you can't beat them join them, and did his best to be even more "liberal" than the rankest "progressive"!

Fox, run by Rupert Murdoch, a man who has allowed a certain leeway and welcomes "conservative" or libertarian commentary, such as Beck and Napolitano, is currently the way it is because of one thing and one thing only: *ratings*! I am sure if the political wind blew the other way they would change gears quicker than James Bond's Aston Martin!

I have read JBS magazines since I was a junior in high school. When I want "news," they're the *first source* of information I go by and rely on! The John Birch Society is not concerned with "ratings," but the *truth*!

Robert Suttle
Sent via e-mail



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