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Poll: Most Americans View Feds as Threat to Liberty

The Founding Fathers created the U.S. government for the express purpose of securing the God-given individual rights of Americans, according to the Declaration of Independence. A [poll](#) released last month, however, [confirmed yet again](#) that a majority of voters now view the perpetually expanding Leviathan as a threat to those rights and individual liberty. More than one in three Americans even fears the federal government, the recent poll showed, confirming other surveys finding broad public agreement that Washington, D.C., has [become dangerous and out of control](#).



The Rasmussen Reports national survey, released on April 18, also shows that trust in federal authorities is plunging fast. More than two thirds of voters, for example, said they view the federal government as a special interest group primarily concerned with protecting its own interests. Only 17 percent did not. Majorities of Republicans, Democrats, and independents all agreed.

Meanwhile, less than one in five Americans surveyed trusts the Washington-based political and bureaucratic classes to do the right thing most of the time — down from 24 percent less than a year ago. On the other hand, 80 percent disagree, and 36 percent of voters surveyed say the federal government rarely or never does the right thing.

Even more stunning than the imploding level of trust in the feds, though, is the fast-spreading fear Americans express about the federal government. In December of 2012, 46 percent viewed the feds as a threat to individual rights, while 45 percent viewed it as a defender of personal freedom. By mid-April, the levels of fear had surged, while the number of Americans who still viewed the federal government as a protector of their rights had plunged.

The latest Rasmussen poll of 1,000 likely voters found that 54 percent “consider the federal government today a threat to individual liberty rather than a protector.” Among Republicans it is three fourths. Even most labor-union members now say D.C. is a threat to freedom. By contrast, just 22 percent of Americans now see the feds as protectors of individual rights — a major decline from the 30 percent who did less than six months ago.

As *The New American* [reported a year ago](#), other polls have found similarly dramatic results. According to a Fox News poll released in May of 2013, for example, more than two thirds of likely voters “feel like the federal government has gotten out of control and is threatening the basic civil liberties of Americans.” Almost half of Democrats agreed that Washington, D.C., was out of control as well — more than the number who disagreed. Just a quarter of respondents did not feel that way, while four percent said they had mixed feelings or it “depends.”

The poll reveals a perception of the government that is entirely at odds with its justification to exist — not to mention the contract that delegated certain limited powers to it. When American colonists



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declared their independence from the tyranny of the British monarchy — citing [a broad array of authoritarian abuses that sound remarkably similar to many of the actions of today's federal government](#) — they specifically said the purpose of government was to protect the individual rights of people that were endowed to them by God.

“We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness,” states the Declaration of Independence. “That to secure these rights, Governments are instituted among Men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed, That 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.”

The preamble to the U.S. Constitution — the contract whereby the sovereign states and people permitted the federal government to exist and exercise a limited number of powers — uses similar language to describe the purpose of the central government. “We the people of the United States, in order to form a more perfect union, establish justice, insure domestic tranquility, provide for the common defense, promote the general welfare, and secure the blessings of liberty to ourselves and our posterity, do ordain and establish this Constitution for the United States of America,” it reads.

The Founding Fathers and early Americans would no doubt be troubled — perhaps mortified — by what became of the once strictly limited government they agreed to create. Despite the best efforts of the out-of-touch education and media establishment, modern Americans seem to understand that. According to the Rasmussen survey, more than 70 percent of voters say that if the Founders came back today, they would view the federal government as too big. Only 3 percent thought the Constitution's framers would consider the federal government too small.

Strong majorities of Americans favor going back in the direction envisioned by the Founders. According to the latest Rasmussen poll, six out of 10 voters would prefer to see a smaller government with fewer services and lower taxes as opposed to a more active government with more services and higher taxes. Nearly three out of four Americans also said the country would be better off if most members of Congress were looking for new jobs after the November elections. Among Republicans, the outrage at establishment politicians is especially pronounced, with 60 percent saying the GOP has lost touch with the party base.

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