

do to protect our freedom and our liberty.

But the highest standards for good, clean government only work if competent citizens agree to serve as elected representatives. Unless honest, thrifty, and reasonable people run for office, government becomes the domain of the special interests.

The crisis of American politics is the neglect of the civic business between the high-profile elections. Elections every two and four years become highlighted by emotion. In reality, the creation of laws and the spending of taxpayer funds take place between and around the two or four year election cycles. Great harm to our country is done by the ignorance or indifference of the majority when lulled by business as usual.

No where does this crisis have more immediate, apparent, and lasting effect than at the local level of politics. The impact of poor government is greatest in our villages, cities, townships, and counties. It is, however, at the community level of government where the greatest positive change can be made.

Many candidates for local office go unchallenged, as though only one person is qualified to run for a position. Lack of choices for candidates brings a greater risk of mismanagement of public affairs. The reason for the lack of people willing to serve, I believe, results from an ungrateful community when honest officials work hard and make tough, even unpopular decisions. To start the process of restoring the idea of service for the good of the community, I would suggest citizens say "Thank you for serving" to elected officials who represent the community interest.

# Freedom-Zine America

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## The New Politics

Public ignorance and apathy are creating a crisis in democracy. A civilization based on a liberal constitution will fail to survive with personal freedom and individual liberty intact unless the general public—"the average Joe"—becomes fully informed and takes positive action. The threats to the safety of families and communities come from long-time enemies of human society—war, disease, poverty, scarcity—and a new man-made nemesis—pollution. The 21<sup>st</sup> century has introduced technology which can allow

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problems from the far side of the globe to affect the United States at home. International mass transit in an age when humans have no immunity to any “super-germ” can bring disaster within our borders. Also, the growing population on a non-expanding planet with dwindling resources creates political, economic, cultural, and social conflicts which ultimately spread from nation to nation, from community to community.

How would American citizens feel about a military government and quarantine in response to either an avian flu pandemic or terrorist biological warfare attack? What would happen to America’s government based on the Constitution? Once lost to the requirements of an emergency, would Americans ever get back the “natural rights” of life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness granted by the Creator? Those rights are fundamental to the country’s founding and the continuing purpose of providing protection to individuals, families and communities from all enemies foreign and domestic. Citizens should not give up those rights carelessly.

A lone individual or a small group of people can do much to hold leaders accountable for the administration of the general welfare of the country. Public involvement can ensure the continuation of democracy in the republic under any conceivable situation by simply guarding the interest of the country, forcing effective measures to deal with conflicts and emergencies, and safeguarding the legitimacy of our

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government derived from the will of the common people.

The United States government has taken a violent approach to international and domestic problems. As seen by the war on terror, the war on drugs, and the plans for a flu pandemic, the solutions to protecting America’s citizens are based on militaristic policies of deterrence and violent action. The real interest of our country demands that the people practice a new politics. The people must take the power away from political leaders who serve their own self-interests. The people must stop saying “Don’t tell me; just do it” and start saying “How can I improve my community and better protect my family interest?” Then comes positive action. The American people can no longer tolerate the mess created by ignoring problems and not taking personal responsibility. How do people begin the new politics? They can run for a local government office or attend meetings as a watchdog of the public interest. People can also volunteer for an organization that helps a community: for example, raising money for Scouts or a senior center. By beginning such action close to home people build better communities for their families and save American rights.

For the Public Good

Since the United States is a republic, the only way to protect the public interest and ensure honest government is for citizens to participate in the process of government. Holding elected, appointed, or hired officials accountable means that every citizen has a duty to stay informed and exercise the right to vote. Taking the time to educate ourselves and voting at all elections in the spring or fall is the least we can

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