

Constitutional awareness:

101 Constitutional Questions to ask Candidates - Produced by W. Cleon Skousen in 1980 for training purposes.

Because so many millions of Americans finally realize that something is seriously wrong with the way the government is handling our affairs, people are continually asking: "Do you think there is still time to turn it around?" When you ask, "Still time before what?" they usually reply: "Before total disaster overtakes." For those who wonder about such things the answer is this: "Yes, there is still time, but not much." The next question is: "What can we do to get America turned around and regain our national sanity?" The answer is: "Elect a President and a majority in Congress who still believe in the Constitution and will fight to return America to her original moorings."

Identifying Constitutional Candidates

"But how can you tell when a candidate for political office is really a Constitutionalist?" If the candidate is already in office he will have a voting record which will clearly show whether or not he is a Constitutionalist. Several organizations monitor the Congress and publish the results. However, if the candidate is a newcomer to politics you will have to test his knowledge of Constitutional principles by asking a few questions.

These questions were taken from the 30th Anniversary Edition of W. Cleon Skousen's book: [THE 5000 YEAR LEAP](#). The answers are contained within the book and summarized starting on page 337. This is a must read book and should be in the center of your personal "I Love America" library.

What Kind of Questions Should Be Asked?

- 1: Under the constitution, who has the sovereign authority to govern?
- 2: In what way are "All men created equal"?
- 3: What is an inalienable right?
- 4: Which inalienable rights were listed in the Declaration of Independence?
- 5: What did the founders mean by the "Pursuit of Happiness"?
- 6: Give an example of an inalienable right that is essential to the "Pursuit of Happiness"?
- 7: What are some of the other Inalienable rights?
- 8: What is the purpose of Government?

The American Structure of Government

- 9: What is a democracy?
- 10: What is a republic?
- 11: Why did Jefferson call the American system a Democratic-Republic?
- 12: Is it a mistake, therefore, to call the United States a Democracy?

The Task of Controlling Power

- 13: Why is separation of power safer than concentration of powers?
- 14: How should the powers of government be separated?
- 15: What remedies did the Founders provide if government officials violated the channel of power assigned to them?
- 16: Why did the Founders want the powers of government flow from the bottom up versus the top down?
- 17: Then why do we have such a complicated and expensive government today?

Separating Power Horizontally

- 18: How did the Founders separate the powers horizontally?
- 19: What happens if the separation of powers breaks down either horizontally or vertically?
- 20: Is the consolidation of government functions the trend today?
- 21: What has caused this?
- 22: What has been the result?
- 23: Has socialism or "collectivism" worked anywhere in the world?
- 24: How did the Founders structure the American system so that socialism would be unconstitutional?

American Leaders Began to Abandon the Founders Success Formula

- 25: Does this mean Theodore Roosevelt was in error when he said the President could do anything except that which the Constitution forbids?
- 26: Was President Woodrow Wilson also in error when he said the United States should become involved in the political and economic affairs of the world?
- 27: Was Franklin D. Roosevelt in error when he structured the New Deal?
- 28: Was Lyndon Johnson in error when he said, "We will take from the haves and give to the have nots!"
- 29: Was President Nixon in error when he continually tried to involve the United States in a "New World Order"?
- 30: Was President Carter in error when he began meddling in domestic affairs of foreign nations?

Presidential Violations of the Constitution

- 31: What about executive orders which are treated as laws after being published in the federal register?
- 32: What about executive agreements between the President and heads of foreign governments?

Judicial Violations of the Constitution

- 33: What about new laws laid down by the Supreme Court?
- 34: How is the Supreme Court supposed to interpret the Constitution?
- 35: Is there any way to curb the Supreme Court from exercising its power in an unconstitutional manner?

Unconstitutional Edicts of Regulatory Agencies

36: Is it Constitutional for an agency of the Federal Government to write rules and regulations which are enforced in the courts as "laws"?

Blurring the Founders' Division of Labor Between the States and the Federal Government

37: How did the Founders intend to divide the problem-solving powers between the States and Federal Government?

38: How did the Founders know whether to assign a problem to the State or Federal Government?

39: How many areas of power were ultimately assigned to the Federal Government?

40: What if the Federal Government thinks it needs more power?

41: Where does it say that the Federal Government is specifically restricted from exercising any power not granted to it by the States?

The 10th Amendment

42: Then how did the government get so much power?

Subverting Two Important Constitutional Clauses

43: What was the Butler Case?

44: In what way has the Commerce Clause been distorted to give the Federal Government unconstitutional powers?

Some Practical Questions

45: Doesn't the more complex nature of modern society require a far more extensive control of the economy by the Federal Government?

46: Waat is a modern example of the Founders' original success formula solving some of the highly complex problems of a modern society?

47: What happened to the Federal budget after the "Butler" case?

48: Is it Constitutional for the government to spend more money that it takes in?

The National Debt

49: How much is the national debt today?

50: How does the U.S. debt compare with the debts of other nations?

51: Why would the Founders have considered this gigantic indebtedness immoral?

What about Welfare?

52: But hasn't much of our money been spent for welfare and other important social programs?

53: But didn't the government have to try to do something to help those in need?

54: But what if the state do not provide needed services?

The National Debt and Foreign Aid

55: In view of America's tremendous national debt, why do we continue giving foreign aid to over a 125 countries?

Social Security

56: Is Social Security an insurance plan or a welfare plan?

57: Is there a better way?

58: Is the Federal Income Tax Constitutional?

59: Is this the type of tax which the Founding Fathers would have employed?

60: Has income tax been administered uniformly?

61: Is it possible to administer the Income Tax fairly?

62: Would it ever be possible to repeal the Federal Income Tax?

63: Would the repeal of the Sixteenth Amendment interfere with defense and other legitimate Federal Responsibilities?

64: What about the thousands of Federal-aid prgrams covering nearly every aspect of American life?

Federal Regulatory Agencies

65: What about EPA?

66: What about OSHA?

67: What about the Federal Communications Commission?

68: What about the Pure Food and Drug Administration?

69: What about Consumer Protection?

What about the Government Setting Up Business Operations?

70: Is there any authority in the Constitution for the government to set up tax-exempt corporations or business operations to compete with tax-paying citizens?

71: How many corporations and businesses does the government operate at the present time which are unauthorized by the constitution?

72: Are all of these tax-exempt?

What Caused the "Sagebrush Rebellion"?

73: Shouldn't all of the states have been admitted to the Union on an equal basis?

74: Which states were strong-armed into accepting statehood without being admitted on an equal footing?

75: In what way were they forced to accept statehood unequally?

76: About how much of the land did the Federal Government usually withhold from these states?

77: Are any of these states attempting to get this land back?

What about Locking Up State Territory as Wilderness Areas?

78: Does the Constitution authorize the President and the Secretary of the Interior to lock up large blocks of land within a state as a "Wilderness Reserve"?

79: Does the Constitution authorize the Federal Government to have a national forest within the confines of a state?

80: Does the Constitution authorize the Federal Government to have national parks within the confines of a state?

What about Federal Control of Energy Resources?

81: Does the Constitution authorize the government to control, regulate, or inhibit the production of energy resources within a state?

Problems with Government Monopolies

82: What about the widely expanded activities of the Interstate Commerce Commission?

83: Does the Constitution authorize the Federal Government to set prices?

84: Does the Constitution authorize the Federal Government to set wages?

The National Labor Relations Board

85: Does the Constitution authorize the Federal Government to enter into labor-management disputes in the private sector?

The Department of HEW

86: Is there any Constitutional foundation for the extravagant and wasteful expenditures of the Department of Health, Education and Welfare?

87: About how much of the Federal budget is spent each year on these unconstitutional activities?

88: Would it require an amendment to the Constitution to eliminate the Department of HEW?

The Equal Rights Amendment

89: Why are so many millions of American women now opposing the passage of the Equal Rights Amendment?

90: What are some of the rights of American women which ERA would destroy?

91: Would passage of the Equal Rights Amendment give women any more rights than they now have?

92: Would the passage of ERA further damage the original separation of power instituted by the Founders?

Abortions

93: Is Federal funding of abortion a violation of the Constitution?

The Gold and Silver Standard

94: Was the United States taken off the gold and silver standard in violation of the Constitution?

The Federal Department of Education

95: Is it Constitutional for Federal funds to be used in the financing of local schools?

96: Should the members of State and educational associations be required by law to pay dues to the National Educational Association?

Taxes and Dividends

97: Should stockholders be required to pay income taxes on their dividends when the corporation has already been subject to a corporate tax?

Control of Firearms

98: Should the Federal Government pass laws providing for the control of guns?

99: Should the Seventeenth Amendment be repealed?

BLM

100: Should the Bureau of Land Management be abolished?

Government Expenses

101: Can you find out how the government spends its money?

Conclusion

Now, as nearly as we can ascertain from the writings of the Founding Fathers, this is about the way they would have answered each of these 101 questions. We have also tried to reflect the line of reasoning which their writings portray when similar questions were raised in their own day. It is believed their point of view deserves careful consideration in view of the rather calamitous consequences which modern Americans have encountered as a result of following a different line of thinking. The socialist or collectivist formula has not worked for Americans; nor any one else for that matter. It is believed this generation of Americans could earn the eternal gratitude of their descendents if they would immediately undertake to restore the Constitution in the tradition of the Founding Fathers.