



Responsibility and politics

The U.S. Constitution established a wonderful governmental system that would work in the best interests of the people if all the cogs in the political machinery worked in harmony. Some folks think that, conceptually, there are only three cogs in that wheel, the legislative, judicial and executive branches. The reality is that there are at least two other cogs, the fourth estate (the press, the media), and the people.

The branches of the federal government are made up of individuals: the president, the president's cabinet, representatives, senators, and Supreme Court justices as well as lower-level judges. How the different branches of government provide checks, balances and oversight to the other branches of government and how the fourth estate and the people hold the government accountable dramatically affect our system of democracy.

When there is no accountability, our democratic system leans closer to an elective "king system." In today's electronic age, that king system becomes even more threatening to our democracy if the power brokers who support "the king" relax the rules so rich supporters of the king can buy out the media in a geographical market and control what the people hear and read, controlling not only the news, but the perspective of reporting, in favor of the king.

That scenario becomes even scarier if, in the name of show biz, if not kowtowing to the media controllers, the fourth estate reports news using labels for political favorites and opponents so that the mere mention of a label causes readers or listeners to jump to a positive or negative conclusion without any thought. Picture what would happen if that same media, when analyzing the positions of politicians, including the king, do not analyze what politicians say, based on facts, but from the standpoint of how effective it is as "spin."

But for that to happen, the people would have to be stupid. And, of course, any group of politicians attempting to create that kind of system would have as their most important premise that the people are gullible. If the people were smart, they would not allow the king to get away with such things. Right?

But imagine what could happen to our country if the voters were not shrewd enough to see through the establishment of a king system. The king could give all the tax breaks to his pals, the richest folks in the country; could declare war against a country that never attacked us, by using fabricated and false evidence, to pad the coffers of his oil industry pals; could allow outsourcing of our industries to other countries with cheap labor, so that his fat cat friends could make even more profits; could intentionally establish almost a \$1.5 trillion trade deficit with communist China to pad the pockets of his rich supporters; could outsource government responsibilities with no-bid contracts to companies owned by his supporters; could use numerous policies to destroy labor unions so that workers would be even more subordinate to his CEO friends; could allow his friends in the loan industry to overextend themselves, resulting in millions of Americans having their homes foreclosed, further damaging of the middle class, etc.

But that could never happen, right? If Congress were going to impeach a president for having sex in the Oval Office, it certainly would impeach a president who engaged in so many anti-American endeavors like those just described—unless the king controlled Congress. But that could never happen, right?

But even if all of that happened, people in this country would rise up and vote the king's supporters out of office and elect a president and a Congress that would revitalize the middle class, get us out of a war based on lies, and establish economic and trade policies to create a healthy economy for all people. Right? The voters would have to be smart. They would have to check out the facts about the candidates and get legislatively active for the right reasons, and resist the self-serving propaganda. They would have to fight the sexist and racial innuendoes used by the king's friends to protect the status quo and assassinate the character of the real people's candidates. As Americans, Democrat, Republican, liberals, conservatives and libertarians, the voters would have to be smart—they would have to brave.

The founding fathers of this country were exactly that when they fought the policies and oppressions of a king, a king named George. ☒