

# First Principles

Cato-Washington-prudent, considerate, careful, determined, honest, inflexible. Virtue-vir = man “love of the laws and of our country “ Montesquieu. Honor and reputation = Washington’s goals. Implementation is important. Know yourself and those you are fighting. Introspection, strategic thinking, reliable intelligence. Study the terrain and make it your friend.

As circumstances change be ready to change views and abandon assumptions. Listen to dissenters and know how to weigh alternatives. Discipline is the soul of the army. Romans- prudent exercise of power. Silent virtue valued more than loud eloquence. “The Preceptor” – Dodsley. Duty of people to resist tyranny (cruel and oppressive government or rule). Sovereignty flows from the people. Jefferson-Epicurus- freedom of the body from pain and if the soul from confusion. Best use of life was to seek tranquility and pleasure. Art of life is the art of avoiding pain. Aristotle, Plato, Livy, Cicero, Sydney, Harrington, Locke. Locke-father of liberalism - divide and limit authority of the state, strengthen authority of parents to act in the best interest of their children. Skepticism and reflection. Declaration of Independence- verbs push nouns. Thomas Paine- “Common Sense.” Jefferson-epicurean- prudence, temperance, fortitude, and justice. Fabius- Roman general won by avoiding battle and wearing out his foe.

Cincinnatus- commander who relinquished power and returned to his farm. War of posts/positions. Popular war- war in which people were involved. Observe and contemplate.

Nathanael Greene to Washington-spoke truth to power. Washington- being indecisive preferable to being decisively wrong. Organized questioning and criticism of those in power-political competition. Catiline- grab power, attack the soul of the nation, threaten its way of life[implicitly means the beginning of the end of the nation. “I like a little rebellion now and then. It is like a storm in the atmosphere.” Jefferson. Jefferson as president- difference of opinion is not a difference of principle. Competitive free market in commerce, politics, and religion. Soul against hierarchy and authority. Warfare against common sense.