

Classical Liberalism and Conservatism in America (Prior to 20th Century)

- Liberal (LEFT)
- Change and Reform
- Laissez-Faire
- Small, weak Central Government
- Protect States' Rights
- Individual Rights most Important
- Jefferson (Father of Classical Liberalism)

- Conservative (Right)
- Stability and Status Quo
- Government Involved in The Economy
- Strong Central Government
- Community Rights most important
- Hamilton (Father of Classical Conservatism)

← Radical (Far Left)

Reactionary (Far Right) →

THOMAS JEFFERSON AND ALEXANDER HAMILTON

THOMAS JEFFERSON

ALEXANDER HAMILTON

**The Power of
the People
vs.
The Power of
Government**

Government's powers should originate from the consent of the governed. The people are the best instrument to judge the actions of government. Even when the people are wrong, government should not regulate their ideas.

The best form of government is a republican government that does not allow the people to influence elected officials directly. Government officials should form public policy for the common good without having to satisfy the passions of the people.

**Revolution
vs.
Stability**

A periodic rebellion is a good thing; political leaders should always be aware that the people possess the spirit of resistance. The nation should not go twenty years without a rebellion.

Stability in government is vital to the success of any nation. Since wealthy people most likely desire stability, they should be given the strongest voice in shaping public policy.

**Farming
vs.
Manufacturing**

The United States should preserve its agricultural society and resist the development of manufacturing. Manufacturing creates large cities, and the mobs of large cities are a threat to good government. Cities also unleash forces that corrupt the morals of the people.

A diverse economy best serves the national interest. Agriculture is essential to human existence, and manufacturing would strengthen the American economy. The United States should promote both agricultural production and manufacturing.

**State Power
vs.
Federal Power**

Since the states granted powers to the federal government, the states should be the final judge of federal laws.

If too much power is granted to the states, each state will have tendency to promote its own interests over the interests of the nation. State laws contrary to the laws of the federal government should be invalid, and the federal government should be more powerful than state governments.