

## Step One

Written by Dr. Sam Clovis  
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All journeys begin with but a single step--so goes the old saw. Last night, some 200 kindred spirits gathered in a sanctuary to hear a presentation on the Constitution and Founding of this great nation. There were many great questions asked at the end of the remarks, but two stood out to me. One was defining the difference between a democracy and a republic and the other was a bit more complicated--what influence has our form of government had on other nations and their forms of government. The answer to the first question is rather straight-forward. The second is a bit more complicated.

A democracy is about majority rule. A republic is about representational government. The first deals with the tyranny of the majority. The second allows voice for various factions that might comprise a population. The first runs hot and reaches decisions in haste. The second is far more deliberate, thus buffing off the edges of heated rhetoric and rash action. Democracies are really about power and control. Republics are about self-governance, popular sovereignty and federalism. The choice is an easy one for those who wish to study the situation. The progressives in this country are constantly striving to supplant the republic with a more "democratic" form of government. Of course, we are not fooled by this at all. What they are really after is the ability of a ruling elite to control the masses in the name of democracy. This type government works only if the majority of the people are dependent on government for their sustenance and well-being. The evidence that progressives want this end-state is irrefutable.

As for the second question, I am not sure that the American form of government has been diffused around the world. I am not sure that it needs to be. In fact, I am sure that the neoconservatives are naive in thinking that the American template is the ticket for all free people. I am sure it is not.

Russell Kirk has written extensively the topic of whether or not the American experience has been or is likely to be repeated. His notion is that the American experience was inevitable because the American culture needed this type of government. Our culture dictated what type of government we would eventually have. As no other country in the world is even remotely like America, it would be foolish to think that our template could be applied anywhere else. Each culture and society gains the government that suits it. Of course, there are disruptions to these assertions. Tyranny and dictatorships are never welcome, but the culture of the nation suggests that such governments will flourish until such time as the culture changes.

There are many things that might affect the culture of a nation. Catastrophe, changing demographics, increased information flow, new wealth or poverty, etc., all play a role in the

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evolution of society. As long as nation-states exist, such changes will affect what goes on inside the borders of a nation. Over time, perhaps, these changes might allow something like the American experience to occur, but this seems a sketchy bet.

As information availability increases, more and more people will seek independence and individual liberty. This is why I think the American experience, rather than being duplicated everywhere in the world, will serve as a model that might be shaped to suit the culture of the exigent society. One cannot expect to see America everywhere, but one can certainly see the American experience in every free nation on earth.