

Federalist No. 10

James Madison

1 By a faction, I understand a number of citizens, whether amounting to a majority or a minority of the whole, who are united and actuated by some common impulse of passion, or of interest, adverse to the rights of other citizens, or to the permanent and aggregate interests of the community.

2 There are two methods of curing the mischiefs of faction: the one, by removing its causes; the other, by controlling its effects.

3 There are again two methods of removing the causes of faction: the one, by destroying the liberty which is essential to its existence; the other, by giving to every citizen the same opinions, the same passions, and the same interests.

4 It could never be more truly said than of the first remedy, that it was worse than the disease. Liberty is to faction what air is to fire, an aliment without which it instantly expires. But it could not be less folly to abolish liberty, which is essential to political life, because it nourishes faction, than it would be to wish the annihilation of air, which is essential to animal life, because it imparts to fire its destructive agency.

5 The second expedient is as impracticable as the first would be unwise. As long as the reason of man continues fallible, and he is at liberty to exercise it, different opinions will be formed. As long as the connection subsists between his reason and his self-love, his opinions and his passions will have a reciprocal influence on each other; and the former will be objects to which the latter will attach themselves. The diversity in the faculties of men, from which the rights of property originate, is not less an insuperable obstacle to a uniformity of interests. The protection of these faculties is the first object of government. From the protection of different and unequal faculties of acquiring property, the possession of different degrees and kinds of property immediately results; and from the influence of these on the sentiments and views of the respective proprietors, ensues a division of the society into different interests and parties.

6 The latent causes of faction are thus sown in the nature of man; and we see them everywhere brought into different degrees of activity, according to the different circumstances of civil society. A zeal for different opinions concerning religion, concerning government, and many other points, as well of speculation as of practice; an attachment to different leaders ambitiously contending for pre-eminence and power; or to persons of other descriptions whose fortunes have been interesting to the human passions, have, in turn, divided mankind into parties, inflamed them with mutual animosity, and rendered them much more disposed to vex and oppress each other than to co-operate for their common good. So strong is this propensity of mankind to fall into mutual animosities, that where no substantial occasion presents itself, the most frivolous and fanciful distinctions have been sufficient to kindle their unfriendly passions

and excite their most violent conflicts. But the most common and durable source of factions has been the various and unequal distribution of property. Those who hold and those who are without property have ever formed distinct interests in society. Those who are creditors, and those who are debtors, fall under a like discrimination. A landed interest, a manufacturing interest, a mercantile interest, a moneyed interest, with many lesser interests, grow up of necessity in civilized nations, and divide them into different classes, actuated by different sentiments and views. The regulation of these various and interfering interests forms the principal task of modern legislation, and involves the spirit of party and faction in the necessary and ordinary operations of the government.

1. Which phrase from the passage provides support for the idea that factions have been a problem in early America?

- A. ". . . whether amounting to a majority or minority of the whole . . . "
- B. "As long as the connection subsists between his reason and his self-love . . . "
- C. "The latent causes of faction are thus sown in the nature of man . . . "
- D. "There are two methods of curing the mischiefs of faction . . . "

2. Which sentence or phrase from the passage provides support for the idea that economic factors contribute to differing political opinions?

- A. "Those who hold and those who are without property have ever formed distinct interests in society."
- B. ". . . the other, by giving to every citizen the same opinions, the same passions, and the same interests."
- C. "The second expedient is as impracticable as the first would be unwise."
- D. ". . . and we see them everywhere brought into different degrees of activity"

3. Which is the best description of a basic premise of the passage?

- A. There are many other types of groups that cause more trouble than factions.
- B. Factions should be promoted as a way for people to become involved in government.
- C. Without factions, governments would not be able to function.
- D. Forming factions is a part of human nature that cannot be prevented.

4. Which is the best description of the reasoning used in the passage?

- A. Because people are always in conflict, governments should be prepared to take strong actions.
- B. Because factions cannot be prevented, government should control their effects.
This answer is correct.
- C. Because governments cannot get people to agree, the smallest government is the best government.
- D. Governments are necessary because people constantly form factions.