



**Minutes of the Board of Visitors  
University of Virginia  
(Thomas Jefferson and James Madison, Members)  
March 4, 1825**

A resolution was moved and agreed to in the following words:

Whereas, it is the duty of this Board to the government under which it lives, and especially to that of which this University is the immediate creation, to pay especial attention to the *principles of government* which shall be inculcated therein, and to provide that none shall be inculcated which are incompatible with those on which the Constitutions of this State, and of the United States were *genuinely based*, in the common opinion; and for this purpose it may be necessary to point out specially where these *principles* are to be found legitimately developed:

Resolved, that it is the opinion of this Board that as to *the general principles of liberty and the rights of man*, in nature and in society, the doctrines of **Locke**, in his "**Essay concerning the true original extent and end of civil government**," and of **Sidney** in his "**Discourses on government**," may be considered as those generally approved by our fellow citizens of this, and the United States, and that on the *distinctive principles* of the government of our State, and of that of the United States, the *best guides* are to be found in,

1. **The Declaration of Independence**, as the fundamental act of union of these States.

2. The book known by the title of "**The Federalist**," being an authority to which appeal is habitually made by all, and rarely declined or denied by any as evidence of the general opinion of those who framed, and of those who accepted the Constitution of the United States, on questions as to its genuine meaning.

3. The Resolutions of the General Assembly of Virginia in 1799 on the subject of the alien and sedition laws, which appeared to accord with the predominant sense of the people of the United States.

4. **The valedictory address of President Washington**, as conveying political lessons of peculiar value.

And that in the branch of the school of law, which is to treat on the subject of civil polity, **these shall be used as the text and documents of the school.**

*[emphasis added]*