

2/6/2010

"The public cannot be too curious concerning the characters of public men."  
--Samuel Adams, letter to James Warren, 1775  
"Nothing is more certain than that a general profligacy and corruption of manners make a people ripe for destruction. A good form of government may hold the rotten materials together for some time, but beyond a certain pitch, even the best constitution will be ineffectual, and slavery must ensue." --John Witherspoon, *The Dominion of Providence Over the Passions of Men*, 1776

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"No man can well doubt the propriety of placing a president of the United States under the most solemn obligations to preserve, protect, and defend the constitution." --Joseph Story

"It is the manners and spirit of a people which preserve a republic in vigor. A degeneracy in these is a canker which soon eats to the heart of its laws and constitution." --Thomas Jefferson, *Notes on Virginia Query 19*, 1781

"Here comes the orator! With his flood of words, and his drop of reason." --Benjamin Franklin

"[N]either the wisest constitution nor the wisest laws will secure the liberty and happiness of a people whose manners are universally corrupt." --Samuel Adams, essay in *The Public Advertiser*, 1749