**The Rights of the Sovereign from *The Leviathan* 1651, Thomas Hobbes (1588-1679)**

**The sovereign has twelve principal rights:**

1. because a successive covenant [contract] cannot override a prior one, the subjects cannot (lawfully) [change the form of government](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Right_of_revolution).
2. because the covenant forming the commonwealth [general good of the people] results from [subjects giving to the sovereign the right to act for them](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Social_contract), the sovereign cannot possibly breach the covenant; and therefore the subjects can never argue to be freed from the covenant because of the actions of the sovereign.
3. the sovereign exists because the majority has consented to his rule; the minority have agreed to abide by this arrangement and must then assent to the sovereign's actions.
4. every subject is author of the acts of the sovereign: hence the sovereign cannot injure any of his [subjects](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/British_subject) and cannot be accused of [injustice](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Injustice).
5. following this, the sovereign cannot justly be [put to death](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Regicide) by the subjects.
6. because the purpose of the commonwealth is peace, and the sovereign has the right to do whatever he thinks necessary for the preserving of peace and security and prevention of discord. Therefore, the sovereign may judge what opinions and doctrines are averse, who shall be allowed to speak to multitudes, and who shall examine the doctrines of all books before they are published.
7. to prescribe the rules of [civil law](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Civil_law_%28legal_system%29) and [property](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Property).
8. to be judge in all cases.
9. to make [war and peace](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/War_powers) as he sees fit and to command the army.
10. to choose councellors, ministers, magistrates and officers.
11. to reward with riches and [honor](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Honour) or to punish with corporal or pecuniary punishment or [ignominy](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ignominy) [shame]
12. to establish laws about honor and a scale of worth.

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**The English Bill of Rights of 1689 stated that there would be:**

1. no royal interference with the law. Though the sovereign remains the fount of justice, he or she cannot unilaterally establish new courts or act as a judge.
2. no [taxation](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Taxation) by [Royal Prerogative](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Royal_Prerogative). The agreement of the parliament became necessary for the implementation of any new taxes
3. freedom to [petition](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Petition) the monarch without fear of retribution
4. no [standing army](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Standing_army) may be maintained during a time of peace without the consent of parliament.
5. no royal interference in the [freedom of the people to have arms](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Right_to_keep_and_bear_arms) for their own defence as suitable to their class and as allowed by law (simultaneously restoring rights previously taken from Protestants by [James II](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/James_II_of_England))
6. no royal interference in the election of members of Parliament
7. the [freedom of speech](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Freedom_of_speech) and debates or proceedings in Parliament ought not to be [impeached or questioned](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Parliamentary_privilege) in any court or place out of Parliament
8. "grants and promises of fines or forfeitures" before conviction are void.
9. no excessive bail or "cruel and unusual" punishments may be imposed.

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| Country/Empire | Absolutist Monarchy or Limited Monarchy? | Why? |
| Louix XIV, France |  |  |
| Peter the Great, Russia |  |  |
| Akbar the Great, Mughal Empire |  |  |
| Suleiman the Magnificent, Ottoman Empire |  |  |
| William and Mary, England |  |  |