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Our system of government is unique among all others in that the people are sovereign and in the extent to which powers and responsibilities are shared among branches and levels of government. In our system of government, it takes effective legislative and public oversight to assure accountable government.

Standing for effective oversight is not easy. All elected officials have had experiences in which oversight information has been misunderstood, taken out of context, or deliberately distorted.

Effective legislative and public oversight are possible only when elected officials behave as statesmen. A statesman effectively balances the needs of his or her most direct constituents and the needs of the larger community.

We the people need to think about how we encourage and discourage our elected officials. If we want to be represented by statesmen, we need to behave like statesmen ourselves.

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