

**A RESPONSE TO HARRY L. HOWARD,
"JOHN WESLEY: TORY OR DEMOCRAT?"**

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I wish to summarize in seven points my comment regarding Dr. Howard's analysis of my "John Wesley and Political Reality" *Methodist History* 12 (October, 1973), 37-42:

1. When Howard asks whether Wesley is "better understood as a democrat than as a Tory" in the era of the American Revolution, he is raising a new question, one I did not ask or attempt to answer.
2. Howard's discussion of the changing content of the party name "Tory" represents a very helpful analysis for which I am much indebted.
3. This changed conception of "Tory," however, is consistent with my analysis of the political changes occurring in Wesley's mind, from early in his life to the time of the American Revolution.
4. When I speak of Wesley's views concerning human delegation and regulation of authority, I make no allusions to democracy. Wesley clearly rejected democracy and affirmed constitutional monarchy. The "human delegation" is not from "the people" but a parliamentary delegation of power to the king.
5. Until contrary evidence is found, I remain persuaded that Sweet and most other Wesleyan scholars locked Wesley into the older Tory image. That has been the stereotype passed on for decades. Further, this stereotypical view is used for an easy dismissal of Wesley's sometimes valuable contribution to political ethics.
6. Wesley's views on liberty are quite highly developed and are not readily attributable to "Tory" opinions, but he was not a democrat. Priestly and Price, whose views on democracy were radical to many, proposed that liberty must include a person's right to a voice in political decisions. Wesley instead affirmed a representative voice without a direct vote by the people. (See H. T. Dickinson *Liberty and Property: Political Ideology in Eighteenth Century Britain* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1977), esp. 195-205).
7. I commend my later essay, "The Political Maturation of John Wesley" *Journal of Church and State*, 25:1 (1983), 57-85.