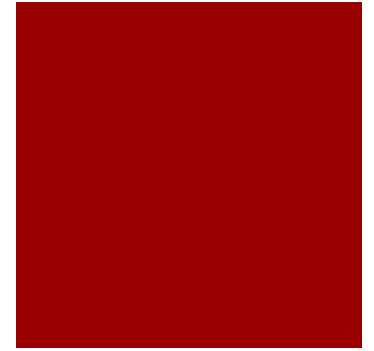




Creating the Constitution

Constitutional Convention



- Philadelphia 1787
- Met in Secret
- Goal: Alter or abolish – fix the old system or create a new one
- Needed to “tweak” the articles

Focus of Convention

- Meeting called by government to revise the articles
 - Did not have the authority to form a whole new government
 - Many delegates thought revising would not be enough
- Voted to keep their debates secret
 - Nailed windows shut / closed the doors
 - Posted guards
 - Wanted to be free to speak their minds

Delegates

- 55 delegates
 - From 12 states
 - Rhode Island did not send delegates
- Who were some of the delegates
 - George Washington – Quickly elected the head of the convention
 - Alexander Hamilton – from New York, only 32, aide to Washington, brilliant in matters of economy
 - James Madison – from Virginia, took EXTENSIVE notes
 - No John Adams / No Thomas Jefferson (Europe)

The Virginia Plan

(Randolph Plan) – Edmund Randolph presented

■ Three Branches

- Legislative – make the laws
- Executive – carry out the laws
- Judicial – interpret the laws

■ Executive branch

- Necessary to correct the weakness of the Articles
- Debate - Consist of one person or a small group

■ Debate over ONE vs. THREE executives

- Three people – more easily win the people's confidence – OR ONE – can act quickly when urgent action required
- Decided on one person – Called the President

The Virginia Plan

- Two Houses
 - Lower house
 - Upper house
- Some wanted the members of the houses to be selected by the STATE legislatures
 - Suggested by Roger Sherman of Connecticut
 - People should have little to do with selecting representatives because they can be easily misled
- Others warn about keeping people out of process
 - James Wilson of Pennsylvania concerned
 - Election of legislature by the people is cornerstone of the whole government.

- Major Conflict
- The Va. Plan called for representation in both houses to be based on **population**

Large States – Support the plan	Small States – Oppose the plan
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Would have great representation since their population was large	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Wanted each state to have equal number of representatives• Keep it the same as in the Articles of Confederation

The New Jersey Plan

- Introduced by William Patterson (of N.J.)
- One house
- With equal representation for each state

Tension high, fear convention will fail and Union will break

The Great Compromise

- Compromise – an agreement in which each side gives up something to what it wants.
 - Proposed by Roger Smith
 - Brings together large and small states
- **Two House Legislature**
 - **Lower house – House of Representatives**
 - Based on population
 - Voted in by the people
 - Two year terms
 - **Upper house – Senate**
 - Each state would have two seats
 - Chosen by state legislatures
 - Six year terms
- HAVE to get smaller states' support

The Three-Fifths Compromise

- North & South debate over slavery
- Will slaves count as population for representation & taxation?
 - South – Yes!
 - North – No!

Remember South has large plantations & few big cities

Three-fifths Plan

- Three-fifths of the slave population will count
 - 500 enslaved people count as 300 people
 - South – more representation
 - North – OK, keeps south in Union
- Hurts African Americans – preserves slavery in the new Constitution

Slave Trade

- Some Northern states want to stop the importation of slaves
 - South says it will ruin their economy
 - Some Northerners support the South. They import/sell slaves to the South – They are business men / merchants.

- Compromise
 - **Import slaves for another 20 years – until 1808**
 - Congress can tax the imported slaves
 - Slave trade INSIDE the United States is not affected
 - Develops into a new problem

New Constitution

- Once terms are agreed upon a committee of STYLE is created to write the document.
 - Delegate Morris writes the Preamble
- **Preamble highlights the difference from Articles**
 - We the People – means authority is from the people not the states
 - A more perfect union – means better than the Articles
- Franklin's advice needed to encourage others to sign
 - Had to remain seated as very ill and let another deliver his speech
 - Admits there are faults but accepts it
 - Points out provisions to improve in future