

Chapter 1 : France - Countries - Office of the Historian

The foundation of the American Government, its purpose, form, and structure, are in the Constitution of the United States. The Constitutional Convention adopted the Constitution on September 17, 1787.

It was written by the colonists, later together known to history as the Pilgrims, who crossed the Atlantic aboard the Mayflower. Almost half of the colonists were part of a separatist group seeking the freedom to practice Christianity according to their own determination and not the will of the English Church. It was passed by Parliament in May, 1773, and given the royal assent by Charles III in June of that year. The Petition is most notable for its confirmation of the principles that taxes can be levied only by Parliament. It was a re-statement in statutory form of the Declaration of Rights presented by the Convention Parliament to William and Mary II in March, 1701, inviting them to become joint sovereigns of England. It lays down limits on the powers of sovereign and sets out the rights of Parliament and rules for freedom of speech in Parliament, the requirement to regular elections to Parliament and the right to petition the monarch without fear. It was an early attempt at forming a union of the colonies "under one government as far as might be necessary for defense and other general important purposes". The act required that many printed materials in the colonies be produced on stamped paper produced in London and carrying an embossed revenue stamp. These printed materials were legal documents, magazines, newspapers and many other types of paper used throughout the colonies.

Mar 5, Boston Massacre The Boston Massacre, also known as the Boston riot, was an incident that led to the deaths of five civilians at the hands of British redcoats on March 5, 1770, the legal aftermath of which helped spark the rebellion in some of the British American colonies, which culminated in the American Revolutionary War.

Dec 16, Boston Tea Party The Boston Tea Party was a direct action by colonists in Boston, a town in the British colony of Massachusetts, against the British government and the monopolistic East India Company that controlled all the tea coming into the colonies. On December 16, 1773, after officials in Boston refused to return three shiploads of taxed tea to Britain, a group of colonists boarded the ships and destroyed the tea by throwing it into Boston Harbor. The acts triggered outrage and resistance in the Thirteen Colonies that later became the United States, and were important developments in the growth of the American Revolution.

Jan 22, American Revolution begins The American Revolution was the political upheaval during the last half of the 18th century in which thirteen colonies in North America joined together to break free from the British Empire, combining to become the United States of America. They first rejected the authority of the Parliament of Great Britain to govern them from overseas without representation, and then expelled all royal officials. It succeeded the First Continental Congress, which met briefly during 1774, also in Philadelphia. The second Congress managed the colonial war effort, and moved incrementally towards independence, adopting the United States Declaration of Independence on July 4, 1776.

Jul 4, Declaration of Independence The Declaration of Independence written by Thomas Jefferson is one of the major books collaborated with Continental Congress who declared their freedom as a legitimate nation in 1776. This proclamation created a revolutionary movement in world history and an inspiration to other nations struggling for their fundamental rights. John Locke, the English philosopher who bestowed upon the world the idea of natural rights was the main influence for Jefferson to incarnate America a state of democracy.

Nov 15, Articles of Confederation The Articles of Confederation, formally the Articles of Confederation and Perpetual Union, was the first constitution of the United States and specified how the Federal government was to operate, including adoption of an official name for the new nation, United States of America. The Second Continental Congress appointed a committee to draft the Articles in June and sent the draft to the states for ratification in November. In practice, the Articles were in use beginning in 1777.

Oct 1, American Revolution ends The war ended with effective American victory in October 1781, followed by formal British abandonment of any claims to the United States with the Treaty of Paris in 1783. A militia that had been raised as a private army defeated an attack on the federal Springfield Armory by the main Shaysite force on February 3, 1787, and four rebels were killed in the action.

May 25, Constitution Convention The year was 1787. For four months, 55 delegates from the several states met to frame a Constitution for a federal republic that would last into "remote futurity. It proposed a bicameral legislature,

resulting in the current United States Senate and House of Representatives. Sep 17, Philadelphia Convention
Although the Convention was purportedly intended only to revise the Articles of Confederation, the intention from the outset of many of its proponents, chief among them James Madison and Alexander Hamilton, was to create a new government rather than fix the existing one. The delegates elected George Washington to preside over the convention. The result of the Convention was the United States Constitution, placing the Convention among the most significant events in the history of the United State Period:

Chapter 2 : Foundations of American Government [calendrierdelascience.com]

American Government. Since the advent of civilization, humans have had an impulse to form governments. It is an experiment thousands of years in the making.

The federal government of the United States is set up by the Constitution. There are three branches. They are the executive branch , the legislative branch , and the judicial branch. State governments and the federal government work in very similar ways. Each state has its own executive, legislative, and judicial branches. The executive branch of a state government is led by a governor , instead of a president. Executive branch[change change source] The executive branch is the part of the government that enforces the law. Members of the U. Electoral College elect a president who is the leader of the executive branch, as well as the leader of the armed forces. The president may veto a bill that the Congress has passed, so it does not become a law. The President may also make "executive orders" to ensure that people follow the law. The president is in charge of many departments that control much of the day-to-day actions of government. For example, Department of Commerce makes rules about trade. The president chooses the heads of these departments, and also nominates federal judges. However, the Senate , part of the legislative branch, must agree with all of the people the president chooses. The president may serve two 4-year terms. The legislative branch is called the United States Congress. Congress is divided into two "houses". One house is the House of Representatives. The Representatives are each elected by voters from a set area within a state. The number of Representatives a state has is based on how many people live there. Representatives serve two-year terms. The total number of representatives today is The leader of the House of Representatives is the Speaker of the House. The other house is the Senate. In the Senate, each state is represented equally, by two senators. Because there are 50 states, there are senators. Senators serve six-year terms. In practice, the vice president is usually absent from the Senate, and a senator serves as president pro tempore , or temporary president, of the Senate. Representatives and senators propose laws, called " bills ", in their respective houses. A bill may be voted upon by the entire house right away or may first go to a small group, known as a committee , which may recommend a bill for a vote by the whole house. If one house votes to pass a bill, the bill then gets sent to the other house; if both houses vote for it, it is then sent to the president, who may sign the bill into law or veto it. If the president vetoes the bill, it is sent back to Congress. If Congress votes again and passes the bill with at least a two-thirds majority , the bill becomes law and cannot be vetoed by the president. Under the American system of federalism , Congress may not make laws that directly control the states; instead, Congress may use the promise of federal funds, or special circumstances such as national emergencies , to encourage the states to follow federal law. This system is both complex and unique. Judicial branch[change change source] The judicial branch is the part of government that interprets what the law means. The Judicial Branch is made up of the Supreme Court and many lower courts. If the Supreme Court decides that a law is not allowed by the Constitution , the law is said to be "struck down" and is no longer a valid law. The Supreme Court is made up of nine judges , called justices, who are nominated by the President and confirmed by the Senate. One of these justices, called the chief justice , heads the court. A Supreme Court justice serves until he or she dies or resigns quits in the middle of his or her term. When that happens, the president nominates someone new to replace the justice who left. If the Senate agrees with that choice, the person becomes a justice. Famous court cases such as Marbury v Madison which was decided in have firmly established that the Supreme Court is the ultimate interpreter of the United States Constitution and has the power to strike down any law that conflicts with it. States can make laws about things inside the state, but federal law is about things dealing with more than one state or dealing with other countries. In some areas, if the federal government makes laws that say different things from the state laws, people must follow the federal law because the state law is not a law any more. Each state has a constitution of its own, different from the federal national Constitution. The federal and most state governments are dominated by two political parties: There are many smaller parties; the largest of these are the Libertarian Party and the Green Party. People help in political campaigns that they like. They try to persuade politicians to help them; this is called lobbying. All Americans are allowed to do these things, but

some have and spend more money than others, or in other ways do more in politics. Some people think this is a problem, and lobby for rules to be made to change it. Since , the president is a Republican, and Congress is also Republican-controlled, so the Republicans have more power in the federal government. There are still many powerful Democrats who can try to stop the Republicans from doing things that they believe will be bad for the country. Also, members of a party in power do not always agree on what to do. If enough people decide to vote against Republicans in the next election, they will lose power. In a republic like the United States, no party can do whatever they want. All politicians have to argue, compromise, and make deals with each other to get things done. They have to answer to the people and take responsibility for their mistakes.

Chapter 3 : NPR Choice page

The Federal Government of the United States (U.S. Federal Government) is the national government of the United States, a federal republic in North America, composed of 50 states, a federal district, five major self-governing territories, and several island possessions.

Our focus in this article will be to pull together many of the themes of these resources and combine them with additional facts and quotes from the founders. First, what was the perspective of the founders of America? Consider some of these famous quotes. John Adams was the second president of the United States. He saw the need for religious values to provide the moral base line for society. We have no government armed with power capable of contending with human passions unbridled by morality and religion. Avarice, ambition, revenge, or gallantry, would break the strongest cords of our Constitution as a whale goes through a net. Our Constitution was made only for a moral and religious people. It is wholly inadequate to the government of any other. Consider this statement from George Washington during his Farewell Address: And let us with caution indulge the supposition, that morality can be maintained without religion. Whatever may be conceded to the influence of refined education on minds of peculiar structure, reason and experience both forbid us to expect that national morality can prevail in exclusion of religious principle. Daniel Webster was the speaker at this celebration. Let us not forget the religious character of our origin. Our fathers were brought hither by their high veneration for the Christian religion. They journeyed by its light, and labored in its hope. They sought to incorporate its principles with the elements of their society, and to diffuse its influence through all their institutions, civil, political, or literary. Christian Character It is clear that the framers of this new government believed that the people should elect and support leaders with character and integrity. George Washington expressed this in his Farewell Address when he said, "Of all the dispositions and habits which lead to political prosperity, Religion and Morality are indispensable supports. He said that, "the only foundation for a useful education in a republic is to be laid on the foundation of religion. Without this there can be no virtue, and without virtue there can be no liberty, and liberty is the object and life of all republican governments. A Christian cannot fail of being useful to the republic, for his religion teaches him that no man "liveth to himself. In his famous Plymouth Rock speech of he said, Lastly, our ancestors established their system of government on morality and religious sentiment. Moral habits, they believed, cannot safely be trusted on any other foundation than religious principle, nor any government be secure which is not supported by moral habits. Whatever makes men good Christians, makes them good citizens. He also served as the president of the American Bible Society. He understood the relationship between government and Christian values. He said, "Providence has given to our people the choice of their rulers, and it is the duty, as well as the privilege and interest of our Christian nation to select and prefer Christians for their rulers. Wherefore governments rather depend upon men, than men upon governments. Let men be good, and the government cannot be bad. Gregg Singer traces the line of influence from the seventeenth century to the eighteenth century in his book, A Theological Interpretation of American History. He says, Whether we look at the Puritans and their fellow colonists of the seventeenth century, or their descendants of the eighteenth century, or those who framed the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution, we see that their political programs were the rather clear reflection of a consciously held political philosophy, and that the various political philosophies which emerged among the American people were intimately related to the theological developments which were taking place. A Christian world and life view furnished the basis for this early political thought which guided the American people for nearly two centuries and whose crowning lay in the writing of the Constitution of Historian Arnold Toynbee, for example, has written that the American Revolution was made possible by American Protestantism. He believes that The Protestant Reformation produced a new kind of consciousness and a new kind of man. The English Colonies in America, in turn, produced a new unique strain of that consciousness. It thus follows that it is impossible to understand the intellectual and moral forces behind the American Revolution without understanding the role that Protestant Christianity played in shaping the ideals, principles and institutions of colonial America. The Reformation, according to Smith, changed these perceptions. Luther

and Calvin, in a sense, created a re-formed individual in a re-formed world. Key to this is the doctrine of the priesthood of the believer where each person is "responsible directly to God for his or her own spiritual state. The individuals who formed the new congregations established their own churches, chose their own ministers, and managed their own affairs without reference to an ecclesiastical hierarchy. Historian Page Smith points out that Thomas Jefferson was not only influenced by secular philosophers, but was also influenced by the Protestant Reformation. He says, Jefferson and other secular-minded Americans subscribed to certain propositions about law and authority that had their roots in the Protestant Reformation. It is a scholarly common-place to point out how much Jefferson and his fellow delegates to the Continental Congress were influenced by Locke. Without disputing this we would simply add that an older and deeper influence -- John Calvin -- was of more profound importance. Jefferson drew heavily on the writings of this highly respected jurist. This will of his Maker is called the law of nature. First, a Right to Life; second, to Liberty; third, to Property;. When men enter into society, it is by voluntary consent. The Declaration was a bold document, but not a radical one. The colonists did not break with England for "light and transient causes. Yet when they suffered from a "long train of abuses and usurpations," they believed that "it is the right of the people to alter or abolish [the existing government] and to institute a new government. What about the Constitution? James Madison was the chief architect of the Constitution as well as one of the authors of the Federalist Papers. It is important to note that as a youth, he studied under a Scottish Presbyterian, Donald Robertson. Madison gave the credit to Robertson for "all that I have been in life. One of the obvious by-products [of the Reformation] was the notion of a contract entered into by two people or by the members of a community amongst themselves that needed no legal sanctions to make it binding. This concept of the Reformers made possible the formation of contractals or, as the Puritans called them, "covenanted" groups formed by individuals who signed a covenant or agreement to found a community. The most famous of these covenants was the Mayflower Compact. In it the Pilgrims formed a "civil body politic," and promised to obey the laws their own government might pass. In short, the individual Pilgrim invented on the spot a new community, one that would be ruled by laws of its making. This new sense of time as potentiality was a vital element in the new consciousness that was to make a revolution and, what was a good deal more difficult, form a new nation. For two generations and more New Englanders had. And I believe they are equally important in the maintenance of that republic. Charles Francis Adams, ed. George Washington, Farewell Address September 19, Daniel Webster, December 22, The Works of Daniel Webster Boston: Little, Brown and Company, , Vol. Thomas and Samuel F. Bradford, , 8. Webster, The Works of Daniel Webster, 22ff. Burt Franklin, , Vol. Franklin, , The Craig Press, , Scholars Press, , 1. Baker Books, , Smylie, "Madison and Witherspoon: Smith, Religious Origins, 3. Duke University Press, , Articles and answers on lots of topics at Probe.

Chapter 4 : American Government [calendrierdelascience.com]

ABOUT THIS COURSE. It reviews all of the substantive material that is usually taught in one-semester introductory course in American Government and politics at college.

Visit Website The impetus for an effective central government lay in wartime urgency, the need for foreign recognition and aid, and the growth of national feeling. Altogether six drafts of the Articles were prepared before Congress settled on a final version in 1787. Benjamin Franklin wrote the first and presented it to Congress in July. It was never formally considered. None of these drafts contributed significantly to the fourth version written by John Dickinson of Pennsylvania, the text that after much revision provided the basis for the Articles approved by Congress. Dickinson prepared his draft in June; it was revised by a committee of Congress and discussed in late July and August. In November the final Articles, much altered by this long deliberative process, were approved for submission to the states. By 1788 all the states had approved it except Maryland, but prospects for acceptance looked bleak, because claims to western lands by other states set Maryland in inflexible opposition. Maryland also supported the demands because nearby Virginia would clearly dominate its neighbor should its claims be accepted. Not all issues had been settled with ratification, however. A disagreement over the appointment of taxes forecast the division over slavery in the Constitutional Convention. With large numbers of slaves, the southern states opposed this requirement, arguing that taxes should be based on the number of white inhabitants. In the middle of the war, Congress had little time and less desire to take action on such matters as the slave trade and fugitive slaves, both issues receiving much attention in the Constitutional Convention. Its revenue would come from the states, each contributing according to the value of privately owned land within its borders. But Congress would exercise considerable powers: Decisions on certain specified matters—making war, entering treaties, regulating coinage, for example—required the assent of nine states in Congress, and all others required a majority. Although the states remained sovereign and independent, no state was to impose restrictions on the trade or the movement of citizens of another state not imposed on its own. Movement across state lines was not to be restricted. To amend the Articles the legislatures of all thirteen states would have to agree. This provision, like many in the Articles, indicated that powerful provincial loyalties and suspicions of central authority persisted. In the so-called Critical Period state actions powerfully affected politics and economic life. For the most part, business prospered and the economy grew. Expansion into the West proceeded and population increased. National problems persisted, however, as American merchants were barred from the British West Indies and the British army continued to hold posts in the Old Northwest, American territory under the Treaty of Paris. These circumstances contributed to a sense that constitutional revision was imperative. Still, national feeling grew slowly in the 1780s, although major efforts to amend the Articles in order to give Congress the power to tax failed in 1788 and 1789. The year after the failure of 1789, the Constitutional Convention met in Philadelphia and effectively closed the history of government under the Articles of Confederation. Eric Foner and John A. Start your free trial today.

Chapter 5 : UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT, Part One

The judicial branch of the U.S. government is the system of federal courts and judges that interprets laws made by the legislative branch and enforced by the executive branch.

No other name appears in the Constitution, and this is the name that appears on money, in treaties, and in legal cases to which it is a party. The terms "Government of the United States of America" or "United States Government" are often used in official documents to represent the federal government as distinct from the states collectively. In casual conversation or writing, the term "Federal Government" is often used, and the term "National Government" is sometimes used. The terms "Federal" and "National" in government agency or program names generally indicate affiliation with the federal government Federal Bureau of Investigation , National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration , National Park Service. Because the seat of government is in Washington, D. History The United States government is based on the principles of federalism and republicanism , in which power is shared between the federal government and state governments. The interpretation and execution of these principles, including what powers the federal government should have and how those powers can be exercised, have been debated ever since the adoption of the Constitution. Some make the case for expansive federal powers while others argue for a more limited role for the central government in relation to individuals, the states, or other recognized entities. Since the American Civil War , the powers of the federal government have generally expanded greatly, although there have been periods since that time of legislative branch dominance. Constitution is the idea of " checks and balances " among the powers and responsibilities of the three branches of American government: For example, while the legislative branch Congress has the power to create law, the executive branch under the president can veto any legislation an act which, in turn, can be overridden by Congress. The Supreme Court, in turn, can invalidate unconstitutional laws passed by the Congress. These and other examples are examined in more detail in the text below. Legislative branch Main article: United States Congress Seal of the U. Congress The United States Congress is the legislative branch of the federal government. It is bicameral , comprising the House of Representatives and the Senate. Makeup of Congress House of Representatives The seats of the House grouped by state The House currently consists of voting members, each of whom represents a congressional district. All representatives serve a two-year term. Each state receives a minimum of one representative in the House. In order to be elected as a representative, an individual must be at least 25 years of age, must have been a U. There is no limit on the number of terms a representative may serve. In addition to the voting members, there are 6 non-voting members, consisting of 5 delegates and one resident commissioner. There are currently senators 2 from each of the 50 states , who each serve six-year terms. Approximately one-third of the Senate stands for election every two years. Different powers The House and Senate each have particular exclusive powers. For example, the Senate must approve give " advice and consent " to many important presidential appointments, including cabinet officers, federal judges including nominees to the Supreme Court , department secretaries heads of federal executive branch departments , U. All legislative bills for raising revenue must originate in the House of Representatives. The powers of Congress are limited to those enumerated in the Constitution; all other powers are reserved to the states and the people. The Constitution also includes the " Necessary and Proper Clause ", which grants Congress the power to "make all laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into execution the foregoing powers". Members of the House and Senate are elected by first-past-the-post voting in every state except Louisiana and Georgia , which have runoffs. Impeachment of federal officers Main article: Impeachment in the United States Congress has the power to remove the president, federal judges, and other federal officers from office. The House of Representatives and Senate have separate roles in this process. The House must first vote to "impeach" the official. Then, a trial is held in the Senate to decide whether the official should be removed from office. Although two presidents have been impeached by the House of Representatives Andrew Johnson and Bill Clinton , neither of them was removed following trial in the Senate. Congressional procedures Article I, Section 2, paragraph 2 of the U. Constitution gives each chamber the power to "determine the rules of its

proceedings". From this provision were created congressional committees , which do the work of drafting legislation and conducting congressional investigations into national matters. The th Congress " had 19 standing committees in the House and 17 in the Senate, plus 4 joint permanent committees with members from both houses overseeing the Library of Congress , printing, taxation, and the economy. In addition, each house may name special, or select, committees to study specific problems. Today, much of the congressional workload is borne by the subcommittees, of which there are around The Constitution grants numerous powers to Congress. Enumerated in Article I, Section 8, these include the powers to levy and collect taxes ; to coin money and regulate its value; provide for punishment for counterfeiting; establish post offices and roads, issue patents, create federal courts inferior to the Supreme Court , combat piracies and felonies , declare war , raise and support armies , provide and maintain a navy , make rules for the regulation of land and naval forces, provide for, arm and discipline the militia , exercise exclusive legislation in the District of Columbia , and to make laws necessary to properly execute powers. Over the two centuries since the United States was formed, many disputes have arisen over the limits on the powers of the federal government. These disputes have often been the subject of lawsuits that have ultimately been decided by the United States Supreme Court. Congressional oversight Main article: Congressional oversight Congressional oversight is intended to prevent waste and fraud, protect civil liberties and individual rights, ensure executive compliance with the law, gather information for making laws and educating the public, and evaluate executive performance. Committee inquiries and hearings Formal consultations with and reports from the president Senate advice and consent for presidential nominations and for treaties House impeachment proceedings and subsequent Senate trials House and Senate proceedings under the 25th Amendment in the event that the president becomes disabled or the office of the vice president falls vacant Informal meetings between legislators and executive officials Congressional membership: Each state is allocated two senators regardless of its population. Executive branch See also: Article Two of the United States Constitution and List of United States federal executive orders The executive power in the federal government is vested in the President of the United States, [7] although power is often delegated to the Cabinet members and other officials. The president is both the head of state and government , as well as the military commander-in-chief and chief diplomat. The president, according to the Constitution, must "take care that the laws be faithfully executed", and "preserve, protect and defend the Constitution". The president presides over the executive branch of the federal government, an organization numbering about 5 million people, including 1 million active-duty military personnel and , postal service employees. The president may sign legislation passed by Congress into law or may veto it, preventing it from becoming law unless two-thirds of both houses of Congress vote to override the veto. The president may unilaterally sign treaties with foreign nations. However, ratification of international treaties requires a two-thirds majority vote in the Senate. The president may be impeached by a majority in the House and removed from office by a two-thirds majority in the Senate for " treason , bribery , or other high crimes and misdemeanors ". The president may not dissolve Congress or call special elections but does have the power to pardon or release criminals convicted of offenses against the federal government except in cases of impeachment , enact executive orders , and with the consent of the Senate appoint Supreme Court justices and federal judges. Vice president Main article: Vice President of the United States Seal of the Vice President of the United States The vice president is the second-highest official in rank of the federal government. In that capacity, the vice president has the authority ex officio , for they are not an elected member of the Senate to cast a tie-breaking vote. Pursuant to the Twelfth Amendment , the vice president presides over the joint session of Congress when it convenes to count the vote of the Electoral College. As first in the U. Lastly, in the case of a Twenty-fifth Amendment succession event, the vice president would become acting president, assuming all of the powers and duties of president, except being designated as president. Accordingly, by circumstances, the Constitution designates the vice president as routinely in the legislative branch, or succeeding to the executive branch as president, or possibly being in both as acting president pursuant to the Twenty-fifth Amendment. Because of circumstances, the overlapping nature of the duties and powers attributed to the office, the title of the office and other matters, such has generated a spirited scholarly dispute regarding attaching an exclusive branch designation to the office of vice president. Cabinet of the United

States , United States federal executive departments , and List of federal agencies in the United States The day-to-day enforcement and administration of federal laws is in the hands of the various federal executive departments , created by Congress to deal with specific areas of national and international affairs. The heads of the 15 departments, chosen by the president and approved with the "advice and consent" of the U. Once confirmed, these "cabinet officers" serve at the pleasure of the president. In addition to departments, a number of staff organizations are grouped into the Executive Office of the President. The employees in these United States government agencies are called federal civil servants.

Chapter 6 : American Government

In constructing this frame of government, practically every feature showed the influence of the unwritten constitution of the British Empire; but also there is hardly a clause which cannot be traced to the constitution of one of the thirteen American states or to colonial practice.

The Basis of the American Republic " A constitution intended to endure for ages to come, and consequently, to be adapted to the various crises of human affairs. Maryland, The Constitution of the United States is the central instrument of American government and the supreme law of the land. For years, it has guided the evolution of governmental institutions and has provided the basis for political stability, individual freedom, economic growth and social progress. The Constitution owes its staying power to its simplicity and flexibility. Originally designed to provide a framework for governing four million people in 13 very different colonies along the Atlantic coast, its basic provisions were so soundly conceived that, with only 26 amendments, it now serves the needs of more than million people in 50 even more diverse states that stretch from the Atlantic to the Pacific Ocean. The path to the Constitution was neither straight nor easy. A draft document emerged in , but only after intense debate and six years of experience with an earlier federal union. The 13 British colonies, strung out along the eastern seaboard of what is now the United States, declared their independence from England in A year before, war had broken out between the colonies and Great Britain, a war for independence that lasted for six bitter years. While still at war, the colonies -- now calling themselves the United States of America -- drafted a compact which bound them together as a nation. The compact, designated the "Articles of Confederation and Perpetual Union," was adopted by a Congress of the states in , and formally signed in July The Articles became binding when they were ratified by the 13th state, Maryland, in March The Articles of Confederation devised a loose association among the states, and set up a federal government with very limited powers. In such critical matters as defense, public finance and trade, the federal government was at the mercy of the state legislatures. It was not an arrangement conducive to stability or strength. Within a short time -- less than six years -- the weakness of the Confederation was apparent to all. Politically and economically, the new nation was close to chaos. In the words of George Washington, the 13 states were united only "by a rope of sand. In February , the Continental Congress, the legislative body of the republic, issued a call for the states to send delegates to Philadelphia to revise the Articles. The Constitutional, or Federal, Convention convened on May 25, , in Independence Hall, where the Declaration of Independence had been adopted 11 years earlier on July 4, Although the delegates had been authorized only to amend the Articles of Confederation, they pushed the Articles aside and proceeded to construct a charter for a wholly new, more centralized form of government. The new document, the Constitution, was completed September 17, , and was officially adopted March 4, The 55 delegates who drafted the Constitution included most of the outstanding leaders, or Founding Fathers, of the new nation. They represented a wide range of interests, backgrounds and stations in life. All agreed, however, on the central objectives expressed in the preamble to the Constitution: We the people of the United States, in order to form a more perfect union, establish justice, insure domestic tranquility, provide for the common defense, promote the general welfare, and secure the blessings of liberty to ourselves and our posterity, do ordain and establish this Constitution for the United States of America. The primary aim of the Constitution was to create a strong elected government, directly responsive to the will of the people. The concept of self-government did not originate with the Americans; indeed, a measure of self-government existed in England at the time. But the degree to which the Constitution committed the United States to rule by the people was unique, and even revolutionary, in comparison with other governments around the world. The Constitution departed sharply from the Articles of Confederation in that it established a strong central, or federal, government with broad powers to regulate relations between the states, and with sole responsibility in such areas as foreign affairs and defense. Centralization proved difficult for many people to accept. America had been settled in large part by Europeans who had left their homelands to escape religious or political oppression, as well as the rigid economic patterns of the Old World, which locked individuals into a particular station in life regardless of their skill or energy. Personal freedom was highly prized by these

settlers and they were wary of any power -- especially that of government -- which might curtail individual liberties. The fear of a strong central authority ran so deep that Rhode Island refused to send delegates to Philadelphia in the belief that a strong national government might be a threat to the ability of its citizens to govern their own lives. The great diversity of the new nation was also a formidable obstacle to unity. The people who were empowered by the Constitution to elect and control their central government were of widely differing origins, beliefs and interests. Their religious beliefs were varied and in most cases strongly held. Economically and socially, the Americans ranged from the landed aristocracy to slaves from Africa and indentured servants working off debts. But the backbone of the country was the middle class -- farmers, tradesmen, mechanics, sailors, shipwrights, weavers, carpenters and a host of others. Americans then, as now, had widely differing opinions on virtually all issues, up to and including the wisdom of breaking free of the British Crown. During the Revolution, a large number of British loyalists -- known as Tories -- fled the country, settling mostly in eastern Canada. Those who stayed behind formed a substantial opposition bloc, although they differed among themselves on the reasons for opposing the Revolution and on what accommodation should be made with the new American republic. In the past two centuries, the diversity of the American people has increased, and yet the essential unity of the nation has grown stronger. From the original 13 states along the Atlantic seaboard, America spread westward across the entire continent. Today it encompasses 50 states, the most recent additions being Alaska and Hawaii in . Throughout the 19th century and on into the 20th, an endless stream of immigrants contributed their skills and their cultural heritages to the growing nation. Pioneers crossed the Appalachian Mountains in the east, settled the Mississippi Valley and the Great Plains in the center of the continent, then crossed the Rocky Mountains and reached the shores of the Pacific Ocean -- 4, kilometers west of the Atlantic coastal areas settled by the first colonists. And as the nation expanded, its vast storehouse of natural resources became apparent to all: The wealth of the new nation generated its own kind of diversity. Special regional and commercial interest groups sprang up. East coast shipowners advocated free trade. Midwest manufacturers argued for import duties to protect their positions in the growing U. Farmers wanted low freight rates and high commodity prices; millers and bakers sought low grain prices; railroad operators wanted the highest freight rates they could get. It was the continuing job of the Constitution and the government it had created to draw all these disparate interests together, to create a common ground and, at the same time, to protect the fundamental rights of all the people. The Founding Fathers had little precedent to guide them when they drafted the Constitution. The Articles of Confederation had also set up a federal government, but its powers were so limited that the states were united in name only. Long before independence was declared, the colonies were functioning governmental units, controlled by the people. And after the revolution had begun -- between January 1, , and April 20, -- 10 of the 13 states had adopted their own constitutions. Most states had a governor elected by the state legislature. The legislature itself was elected by popular vote. Compared with the complexities of contemporary government, the problems of governing four million people in much less developed economic conditions seem small indeed. But the authors of the Constitution were building for the future as well as the present. They were keenly aware of the need for a structure of government that would work not only in their lifetime, but for generations to come. Hence, they included in the Constitution a provision for amending the document when social, economic or political conditions demanded it. Twenty-six amendments have been passed since ratification, and the flexibility of the Constitution has proven to be one of its greatest strengths. Without such flexibility, it is inconceivable that a document drafted more than years ago could effectively serve the needs of million people, and thousands upon thousands of governmental units at all levels in the United States today. Nor could it have applied with equal force and precision to the problems of small towns and great cities. The Constitution and the federal government thus stand at the peak of a governmental pyramid which includes local and state jurisdictions. Disputes between different jurisdictions are resolved by the courts. However, there are questions involving the national interest which require the cooperation of all levels of government simultaneously, and the Constitution makes provision for this as well. American public schools are largely administered by local jurisdictions, adhering to statewide standards. But the federal government also aids the schools, since literacy and educational attainment is a matter of vital national interest, and it enforces uniform standards designed to

further equal educational opportunity. In other areas, such as housing, health and welfare, there is a similar partnership between the various levels of government. No product of human society is perfect. Despite its many amendments, the Constitution of the United States probably still contains flaws which will become evident in future periods of stress. But two centuries of growth and unrivaled prosperity have proven the foresight of the 55 men who worked through the summer of to lay the foundation of American government.

Chapter 7 : Three Branches of Government - HISTORY

If being moderate and powerful are markers of being establishment, it's no wonder American voters are revolting against it. After all, Americans are running away from the middle.

Eager to show the decaying Old World its strength, the United States needed no prodding to embark on its dream of an Asian empire. The Philippines was the stuff with which that dream was made of. And while American imperialists dreamed, a foot soldier, one Pvt. He pressed the trigger that snuffed out the life of a Filipino insurrecto crossing the bridge. The Filipino-American War was on. Meanwhile, in the White House, a president was wracked with insomnia. After pacing the floor, President William McKinley sank on his knees and asked God to show him the way. McKinley, who was running for re-election, implicitly said it was so. They were met with a formidable opposition by William Jennings Bryan, by many Republicans and ever-alert American public opinion. Their protestations of injured self-respect, their shallow argument that we were unprepared for the responsibilities of freedom may have been quite true, but only in the sense that we were not strong enough to defend ourselves against the Germans and the British who were then around and waiting, too, for an opportunity to force us into their empires. But for the Americans to have concluded that we were unprepared for self-government was a fallacy. By then, the Malolos Constitution had been framed – a most liberal document – that can compare with the most democratic in the world. For all its inadequacies, the Spaniards had developed in the Philippines a school system that trained not only priests but also scholars steeped in the humanities. It was, after all, in the Philippines where they established the University of Sto. It was one of the aims of the Propaganda Movement, as epitomized by La Solidaridad, to show that the Filipinos were capable and equal to the tasks of government and of the church, which were the sole prerogative of the Spanish hierarchs. Although the Americans did not permit the Filipinos to be represented in Paris when Spain ceded the Philippines to the United States, the Americans recognized the capacity of the ilustrados to rule. The ilustrados on the other hand saw the immediate necessity of collaborating with the Americans. It was these considerations, perhaps, which led the Americans to institute as quickly as possible even while guerilla warfare was still being waged by the tulisanes the civil government and transfer the responsibilities of government gradually to the Filipinos. Thus, even when the death throes of the First Republic were not yet over, the pattern for eventual self-rule by the Filipinos was already set. Otis then military governor of the country, Charles Denby and Dean C. At the time, the guerillas still controlled many areas of the country and it was physically impossible for the commission to make a thorough study of the needs of the country and to make final recommendations. It did draw up, however, the following far-reaching plans: More than any other institution, it has been responsible for the mobility of thousands of lower class Filipinos and created in the country one of the richest funds of technology and creative energy. The First Commission which was only advisory in nature was immediately succeeded by the Taft Commission. Now vested with legislative and executive powers, the Taft Commission hastened the transfer of the military government to civilians. Upon arriving in the country in , the Commission immediately made public its program. Arthur MacArthur father of Gen. Douglas MacArthur who was the military governor at that time, retained some of his powers. After several public sessions, the Commission passed more than basic laws and laid the foundation for the civil service system. In the meantime, the military government was just as active. It had committed atrocities in the field but eventually, its achievement in government appeared impressive. Merritt took over the government from the Spanish Governor-general, one of his official acts was to set up military courts. Municipal elections were held in Baliwag, Bulacan on May 6, , was the first town to have a Filipino mayor, Francisco Guerrero, under the American regime. His face glistening, his white mane aquiver, he laid down in simple terms the basis of American policy towards the Philippines. His lenient and liberal views concerning the Philippine desire for freedom won him many friends among the Filipinos but he also displeased many, particularly the Manila-Americans whose business interests openly collided with those of the Filipinos. It is not difficult to fathom why the American administration tried to suppress the resurgent nationalism of the Filipinos during the first decade of this century. But while did they channel the energies of fiery leaders to the more basic task at

hand and gave them more responsibilities in the management of the government. Governor Taft helped in passing before the American Congress of the Philippine Bill of 1902, which provided for the establishment of a Philippine Assembly, the publication of census and the dispatch of Filipino resident commissioners to Washington to present Filipino views. With the exception of the non-Christian areas, the administration of the country was gradually turned over to the Filipinos and by 1903, the Commission was controlled by Filipino themselves. In President Wilson, the Filipino leaders found a sympathizer and friend. He gave five seats of the Commission to them and retained four for the Americans. By 1906 when the Jones Law sponsored by Rep. William Atkinson Jones, a Virginia Democrat who passed the pattern for American rule was even more clearly defined. Filipino independence was assured. The early part of the American regime was not, however, without its basic shortcomings. Their divination should have not been difficult. The development of the American nation, after all, started with the land, from the robust energy of its settlers. It was during the American regime that the real impetus for the plantation of the economy developed; it was the Americans who hammered out the protective tariffs for Philippine agricultural products and started the bonanza of sugar quota whose evils and inequalities persist to this very day. In short, the agrarian problem which continues to bedevil the country was largely ignored by the Americans. They inherited it from the Spaniards, no doubt. Furthermore, it was also deeply woven into the social fabric – a curse that had its beginnings in the encomiendas, in the royal grants of vast tracts of land to court favorites and to supposedly benign dispensers of faith – the friars. The early administrators were aware of this. In fact, Governor Taft even went to Rome and had an audience with the Pope. But their efforts, in its totality, was lukewarm. In the first place, they were quite irresolute about disturbing the social order and furthermore, their hands were tied by the Treaty of Paris which protected the rights of the powerful religious orders – the Dominicans, the Augustinians and the Recollects. Due to the negotiations made in by Taft and his assistants, the government was able to buy only 1,000,000 hectares for US 7 million dollars from the friars and consequently, some 60 thousand tenants were given titles to farms which they and their forefathers had tilled. But the sale of the friar lands was not a final solution to agrarian unrest nor was it a continuous effort. There was a heavy opposition to land reform since the friars and the Roman Catholic organizations that owned the lands were not willing to let go their properties. The friar lands, moreover, is but one aspect of the agrarian problem. The cadastral surveys that were made shortly after the start of the American occupation legalized the ownership of many Filipinos of their land. Unfortunately, it also made the land grabbers of many educated and wealthy Filipinos who saw in the technicality of the surveys an opportunity to rob the ignorant farmers. Unlettered thousands who used the natural landmarks of mounds, trees and trails, as the boundaries of their farms suddenly found themselves dispossessed by a scrap of a paper called Torrens Title. It has often been claimed that the one single factor, which contributed to the economic growth of the country during the American regime, was its free trade with the United States. In 1902, our exports to the United States were already granted a 25 percent discount on the regular American tariff rate. Furthermore, the Treaty of Paris provided for preferential treatment for a period of ten years and even when this time elapsed, the United States Congress quickly enacted laws that sent American goods duty-free to the Philippines, at the same time, Philippine goods were admitted at a reduced tariff. The prosperity did not go down to the form and fifty years later, scholars making studies on the national economy confirmed this conclusion. The artificial prosperity was known, of course, to Filipino leaders like Aguinaldo, Quezon, Osmena and others who advocated economic nationalism. But such pleas were cast to the wind. More emphasis one export crops like tobacco, coconut, sugar and abaca were given by the producers while industrialization was dilly-dallied with. America also built roads: The road building program at times was on scale, particularly with such engineering feats as the Kennon road. Criticized as a useless expenditure and whim of the American rulers who wanted a retreat in Baguio, the Kennon Road was but one facet of the attention that the United States directed on the transportation problem. The record in public health was just as impressive, the Americans moved to sanitize the country, to banish the filth that was the cause of cholera and smallpox epidemics at the turn of the century. The large-scale vaccinations and improvement of sanitation was primarily designed to protect American lives. Nevertheless it had the effect of making the whole country the cleanest in all Asia. In the regions that were already at peace, the soldiers became the first teachers. With

candies, free books and pencils, they lured Filipino children to classroom and by more than thousand Filipinos already knew by heart the story of a boy named George and now he chopped down his cherry tree. It is not necessary to make Yankees out of them. There is in the Filipino a voracious capacity to assimilate foreign influences, to mimic the vices of the West, not its virtues. The Americans had done in a few years what the Spaniards could not accomplish lay down the foundations of political modernization. But this modernization did not create a viable national identity that would shape institutions, which, in turn, will accommodate the talents, the energies and the aspirations of the Filipino themselves. In other words, American style politics has not been able to enlarge the institutions so that they could serve "not just the oligarchy that had its beginnings in the Spanish mestizo elite" but the Indios, the masses for whom Bonifacio started the Philippine Revolution. In a cogent sense, Filipinos could not blame anyone but themselves. The Americans turned out to be benevolent administrators who could not help themselves. In the first decade of their rule, they had to work with the ilustrados whom the Spaniards could not accommodate into their power enclave. And most of these ilustrados were in a sense, a creation of the colonial society. And as creations of colonialism, they were no different in values and attitudes from the colonialists whom they replaced "whether they were Spaniards, Americans or Japanese. They did not have the granite determination to fructify the Philippine vision which is no other than the creation of a nation that will endure because there is commitment to its building from the poorest farmer and laborer. Much of our historical obsession today is centered on the Revolution of Or, on that fateful evening that President McKinley courted divine interference. What would have happened if he decided to let go the Philippines? Would have it reverted into the anarchist hell as he had dourly foretold and therefore, confirmed the lingering suspicion that the Filipinos would not be able to govern themselves? The institution of civil government by the Americans trained us in the craft of government and laid down the foundations too, of the two-party system. But at the same time, it sapped the vigor, determination and motivation for the Revolution that would have helped us to self-discovery. Whatever lofty intentions the Americans had, they succeeded in making Filipinos into poor imitations of themselves. The Americans "as exemplified by Ralph Waldo Emerson" were able to spell out for themselves their national goals, casting themselves to adrift from their European and British past. And because they have also been tutors and benefactors, they will only be too glad that the Filipinos have learned their lessons well.

Chapter 8 : History of the United States - Wikipedia

The Founding Fathers, the framers of the Constitution, wanted to form a government that did not allow one person to have too much control. With this in mind, they wrote the Constitution to provide for a separation of powers, or three separate branches of government. Each branch has its own.

The Formation of a National Government "Every man, and every body of men on earth, possess the right of self-government. It gave them a thousand memories of mutual hope and struggle. But most of all, it gave them the challenge to prove they possessed a genuine ability to hold their new place, to prove their capacity for self-government. The success of the Revolution had furnished Americans with the opportunity to give legal form and expression to their political ideals as expressed in the Declaration of Independence and to remedy some of their grievances through state constitutions. As James Madison, fourth President of the United States, wrote, "Nothing has excited more admiration than the manner in which free governments have been established in America; for it was the first instance Yet the written constitution was developed in America and is among the earliest in history. Americans everywhere demanded "a standing law to live by. Writing these documents provided a splendid opportunity for the democratic elements to remedy their grievances and to realize their ambitions for sound government. And most of the resulting constitutions showed the impact of democratic ideas, though none made any drastic break with the past, built as they were by Americans on the solid foundation of colonial experience, English practice, and French political philosophy. Indeed, it was actually in the drafting of these state constitutions that the revolution was accomplished. Other states considerably enlarged this list to include freedom of speech, of assemblage, of petition, of bearing arms, the right to a writ of habeas corpus, inviolability of domicile, and equal operation of the laws. In addition, all the state constitutions paid allegiance to the theory of executive, legislative, and judiciary branches, each one to be checked and balanced by the others. While the thirteen original colonies were being transformed into states and adjusting themselves to the conditions of independence, new commonwealths were developing in the vast expanse of land stretching west from the seaboard settlements. Lured by the finest hunting and the richest land yet found in the country, pioneers poured west of the Appalachian Mountains. By , the far-flung outposts scattered along the waterways had tens of thousands of settlers. Separated by mountain ranges and hundreds of miles from the centers of political authority in the east, the inhabitants established their own governments, and the communities thrived lustily. Settlers from all the tidewater states pressed through into the fertile river valleys, the hardwood forests, and over the rolling prairies. By , the population of the trans-Appalachian region numbered well over , With the end of the Revolution, the United States had inherited the old unsolved western question - the problem of "empire" - with its complications of land, fur trade, Indians, settlement, and government of dependencies. Before the war, several colonies had had extensive and often overlapping claims to land beyond the Appalachians. The prospect of these states acquiring this rich territorial prize seemed quite unfair to those without claims in the west. Maryland, the spokesman of the latter group, introduced a resolution that the western lands be considered common property to be parceled out by Congress into free and independent governments. This idea was not received enthusiastically. Nonetheless, in , New York led the way by ceding her claims to the United States. She was soon followed by the other colonies and, by the end of the war, it was apparent that Congress would come into possession of all the lands north of the Ohio River and probably of all west of the Allegheny Mountains. This common possession of millions of acres was the most tangible evidence of nationality and unity that existed during these troubled years and gave a certain substance to the idea of national sovereignty. Yet it was at the same time a problem which pressed for solution. This solution was achieved under the Articles of Confederation, a formal agreement which had loosely unified the colonies since Under the Articles, a system of limited self-government was applied to the new western lands and satisfactorily bridged the gap between wilderness and statehood. This system, set forth in the Northwest Ordinance of , has since been applied to all of the continental possessions and most of the insular possessions of the United States. The Ordinance of provided for the organization of the Northwest Territory initially as a single district, ruled by a governor and judges appointed by Congress. When this territory should contain five

thousand male inhabitants of voting age, it was to be entitled to a legislature of two chambers, itself electing the lower house. In addition, it could at that time send a nonvoting delegate to Congress. No more than five nor less than three states were to be formed out of this territory, and whenever any one of them had sixty thousand free inhabitants, it was to be admitted to the Union "on an equal footing with the original states in all respects. The new policy repudiated the time-honored doctrine that colonies existed for the benefit of the mother country and were politically subordinate and socially inferior. This concept was replaced by the principle that colonies were but the extension of the nation and were entitled, not as a privilege but as a right, to all the benefits of equality. The enlightened provisions of the Ordinance laid the permanent foundations for the American territorial system and colonial policy, and enabled the United States to expand westward to the Pacific Ocean and to develop from thirteen to forty-eight states, with relatively little difficulty. Unfortunately, however, in the solution of other problems the Articles of Confederation proved disappointing. Their notable shortcoming was their failure to provide a real national government for the thirteen states which had been tending strongly towards unification since their delegates first met in to protect their liberties against encroaching British power. Pressures arising from the struggle with England had done much to change their attitude of twenty years before when colonial assemblies had rejected the Albany Plan of Union. Then they had refused to surrender even the smallest part of their autonomy to any other body, even one they themselves had elected. But, in the course of the Revolution, mutual aid proved efficacious, and the fear of relinquishing individual authority in some spheres had, to a large degree, lessened. The Articles went into effect in 1781. Though they constituted an advance over the loose arrangement provided by the Continental Congress system, the governmental framework they established had many weaknesses. There was quarreling over boundary lines. The courts handed down decisions which conflicted with one another. The legislatures of Massachusetts, New York, and Pennsylvania passed tariff laws which injured their smaller neighbors. Restrictions upon commerce between states created bitter feeling. New Jersey men, for example, could not cross the Hudson River to sell vegetables in New York markets without paying heavy entrance and clearance fees. The national government should have had the power to lay whatever tariffs were necessary and to regulate commerce -but it did not. It should have had the authority to levy taxes for national purposes-but again it did not. It should have had sole control of international relations, but a number of states had begun their own negotiations with foreign nations. Nine states had organized their own armies, and several had little navies of their own. There was a curious hodgepodge of coins minted by a dozen foreign nations and a bewildering variety of state and national paper bills, all fast depreciating in value. Economic difficulties subsequent to the war also caused discontent, especially among the farmers. Farm produce tended to be a glut on the market, and general unrest centered chiefly among farmer-debtors who wanted strong remedies to insure against the foreclosure of mortgages on their property and to avoid imprisonment for debt. Courts were clogged with suits for debt. All through the summer of 1786, popular conventions and informal gatherings in several states demanded reform in the state administrations. In one state - Massachusetts - mobs of farmers, under the leadership of a former army captain, Daniel Shays, in the autumn of 1786, began forcibly to prevent the county courts from sitting and to prevent further judgments for debt, pending the next state election. They met with stout resistance from the state government, and for a few days there was danger that the state house in Boston would be besieged by an infuriated yeomanry. But the rebels, armed chiefly with staves and pitchforks, were repulsed by the militia and scattered into the hills. Only after the uprising was crushed did the legislature consider the justice of the grievances which had caused it and take steps to remedy them. At this time, Washington wrote that the states were united only by a "rope of sand," and the prestige of the Congress had fallen to a low point. Disputes between Maryland and Virginia over navigation in the Potomac River led to a conference of representatives of five states at Annapolis in 1786. One of these delegates, Alexander Hamilton, convinced his colleagues that commerce was too much bound up with other questions and that the situation was too serious to be dealt with by so unrepresentative a body as themselves. He induced the gathering to call upon all the states to appoint representatives of the United States and to "devise such further provisions as shall appear to them necessary to render the Constitution of the Federal Government adequate to the exigencies of the Union. The state legislatures sent leaders with experience in colonial and state governments, in Congress, on the bench, and in

the field. George Washington, regarded as the outstanding citizen in the entire country because of his military leadership during the Revolution and because of his integrity and reputation, was chosen as presiding officer. The sage Benjamin Franklin, now eighty-one and mellow with years, let the younger men do most of the talking, but his kindly humor and wide experience in diplomacy helped ease some of the difficulties among the other delegates. Prominent among the more active members were Gouverneur Morris, able and daring, who clearly saw the need for national government, and James Wilson, also of Pennsylvania, who labored indefatigably for the national idea. From Virginia came James Madison, a practical young statesman, a thorough student of politics and history and, Roger Sherman, shoemaker turned judge, Was one of the representatives from Connecticut. From New York came Alexander Hamilton, just turned thirty and already famous. One of the few great men of colonial America absent was Thomas Jefferson who was in France on a mission of state. Among the fifty-five delegates, youth predominated, for the average age was forty-two. The Convention had been authorized merely to draft amendments to the Articles of Confederation but, as Madison later wrote, the delegates "with a manly confidence in their country" simply threw the Articles aside and went ahead with the consideration of a wholly new form of government. In their work, the delegates recognized that the predominant need was to reconcile two different powers -the power of local control which was already being exercised by the thirteen semi-independent states and the power of a central government. They adopted the principle that the functions and powers of the national government, being new, general, and inclusive, had to be carefully defined and stated, while all other functions and powers were to be understood as belonging to the states. They recognized, however, the necessity of giving the national government real power and thus generally accepted the fact that the national government be empowered - among other things -to coin money, to regulate commerce, to declare war, and make peace. These functions, of necessity, called for the machinery of a national government. This principle was naturally supported by colonial experience and strengthened by the writings of Locke with which most of the delegates were familiar. These influences led to the understanding that three distinct branches of government be established, each equal and coordinate with the others. The legislative, executive, and judicial powers were to be so adjusted and interlocked as to permit harmonious operation. At the same time they were to be so well balanced that no one interest could ever gain control. It was natural also for the delegates to assume that the legislative branch, like the colonial legislatures and the British Parliament, should consist of two houses. On these broad, general views there was homogeneity. But sharp differences arose within the assemblage as to the method of achieving the desired ends. Representatives of the small states, New Jersey, for instance, objected to changes that would reduce their influence in the federal government by basing representation upon population instead of upon statehood, as under the Articles of Confederation. On the other hand, representatives of the large states like Virginia argued vehemently for proportionate representation. Over this question, the debate threatened to go on endlessly until finally the Connecticut delegate came forward with very able arguments in support of a plan for representation in proportion to the population of the states in one house of Congress and equal representation in the other. The alignment of large against small states then dissolved. Almost every succeeding question, however, raised new alignments to be resolved only by new compromises. Certain members wished no branch of the federal government to be elected directly by the people; others thought it must be given as broad a basis as possible. Some delegates wished to exclude the growing west from the opportunity of statehood; others championed the equality principle established in the Ordinance of 1787. There was no serious difference of opinion on such national economic questions as paper money, tender laws, and laws impairing the obligation of contracts. But there was a need for balancing the distinct sectional economic interests; for settling heated arguments as to the powers, term, and selection of the executive; and for solving the problems concerning the tenure of judges and the kind of courts to be established. Conscientiously and with determination, through a hot Philadelphia summer, the Convention labored to iron out problems. It finally achieved a satisfactory draft which incorporated in a brief document the organization of the most complex government yet devised by man -a government supreme within its sphere, but within a sphere that is defined and limited. As the Tenth Amendment made clear in 1791, "the powers not delegated to the United States by the Constitution, nor prohibited by it to the States, are reserved to the States respectively, or to the people"; and the supremacy of

federal laws is limited to such as "shall be made in pursuance of the Constitution.

Chapter 9 : The establishment of civil government in the Philippines.

The federal government of the United States was created by the Constitution, which went into operation in when the first Congress convened and George Washington took the oath of office as president.

Foundations of American Government Sea travel expanded the horizons of many European nations and created prosperity and the conditions for the Enlightenment. In turn, the Enlightenment ideals of liberty, equality, and justice helped to create the conditions for the American Revolution and the subsequent Constitution. Democracy was not created in a heartbeat. In a world where people were ruled by monarchs from above, the idea of self-government is entirely alien. Democracy takes practice and wisdom from experience. The American colonies began developing a democratic tradition during their earliest stages of development. Over years later, the colonists believed their experience was great enough to refuse to recognize the British king. The first decade was rocky. The American Revolution and the domestic instability that followed prompted a call for a new type of government with a constitution to guarantee liberty. The constitution drafted in the early days of the independent American republic has endured longer than any in human history. Where did this democratic tradition truly begin? But the Enlightenment of 17th-century Europe had the most immediate impact on the framers of the United States Constitution. The Philosophes Europeans of the 17th century no longer lived in the "darkness" of the Middle Ages. Ocean voyages had put them in touch with many world civilizations, and trade had created a prosperous middle class. The Protestant Reformation encouraged free thinkers to question the practices of the Catholic Church, and the printing press spread the new ideas relatively quickly and easily. The time was ripe for the philosophes, scholars who promoted democracy and justice through discussions of individual liberty and equality. The ideas of 18th-century philosophes inspired the Founding Fathers to revolt against what they perceived as unfair British taxation. Washington Crossing the Delaware is one of the most famous depictions of the American Revolution. One of the first philosophes was Thomas Hobbes, an Englishman who concluded in his famous book, Leviathan, that people are incapable of ruling themselves, primarily because humans are naturally self-centered and quarrelsome and need the iron fist of a strong leader. Later philosophes, like Voltaire, Montesquieu, and Rousseau were more optimistic about democracy. Their ideas encouraged the questioning of absolute monarchs, like the Bourbon family that ruled France. Montesquieu suggested a separation of powers into branches of government not unlike the system Americans would later adopt. They found eager students who later became the founders of the American government. John Locke The single most important influence that shaped the founding of the United States comes from John Locke, a 17th century Englishman who redefined the nature of government. Although he agreed with Hobbes regarding the self-interested nature of humans, he was much more optimistic about their ability to use reason to avoid tyranny. In his Second Treatise of Government, Locke identified the basis of a legitimate government. According to Locke, a ruler gains authority through the consent of the governed. The duty of that government is to protect the natural rights of the people, which Locke believed to include life, liberty, and property. If the government should fail to protect these rights, its citizens would have the right to overthrow that government. This idea deeply influenced Thomas Jefferson as he drafted the Declaration of Independence. Important English Documents Ironically, the English political system provided the grist for the revolt of its own American colonies. For many centuries English monarchs had allowed restrictions to be placed on their ultimate power. Although the document only forced King John to consult nobles before he made arbitrary decisions like passing taxes, the Magna Carta provided the basis for the later development of Parliament. Over the years, representative government led by a Prime Minister came to control and eventually replace the king as the real source of power in Britain. The ideas of the French Enlightenment philosophes strongly influenced the American revolutionaries. French intellectuals met in salons like this one to exchange ideas and define their ideals such as liberty, equality, and justice. The Petition of Right extended the rights of "commoners" to have a voice in the government. The English Bill of Rights guaranteed free elections and rights for citizens accused of crime. Although King George III still had some real power in , Britain was already well along on the path of

democracy by that time. The foundations of American government lie squarely in the 17th and 18th century European Enlightenment. The American founders were well versed in the writings of the philosophes, whose ideas influenced the shaping of the new country. Thomas Jefferson, George Washington, James Madison, and others took the brave steps of creating a government based on the Enlightenment values of liberty, equality, and a new form of justice. More than years later, that government is still intact.