**Guided Notes: Foundation and Review Part 2**

After the war, many of the states developed state constitutions, or reverted to back to their original charters. All of them made sure to include written liberties. However, **war is expensive**, and took its toll on the colonies. Many states, trying to financially recover, continued to **levy very high taxes**.

The high taxes did not sit well with citizens. In 1787, a group of Massachusetts farmers staged an **armed uprising.** They attacked the county courts because they were holding an auction of belongings of people who couldn’t afford the unfair taxes. **Shay’s Rebellion** was put down by the militia, but it made American leaders realize that a new national government needed to be created.

**Articles of Confederation:**

In creating a new government, the main goal was to **prevent governmental tyranny**. They decided that the new nation would be a **republic**, a country in which the people **elect representatives** to govern them. The catch was that only Caucasian property owners could vote.

The first national government that came together was known as the **Articles of Confederation**. In the articles, the national government would be run by a **legislative** body known as the **Confederation Congress**. Each state, regardless of size, had **one vote** in this congress.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Powers Granted** | **Powers Denied** |
| * **Declare War and Peace**
* **Issue or borrow Money**
* Conduct foreign affairs
* Control Western territories
* Control Indian Affairs
* Run postal service
 | * **Enforce national laws**
* **Collect taxes**
* Establish an executive branch
* Regulated interstate or foreign trade
* Establish federal courts
* Amend the Articles
 |

Most of the significant power was granted to the **states.** Many states **limited** powers of the **governors** in order to make sure that they did not become oppressive like the British King.

A problem arose when the Articles were given to the states to be ratified. No one had decided who would control the **Northwest Territory**, since several states made claims to the same land. Small states refused to sign the Articles because they felt that they would be at a disadvantage unless western lands were placed under control of the national government. Eventually, all states gave up claims to the Northwest Territory, and all states ratified the document.

Now that the national government had control of Western lands, they had to decide how to divide and govern these lands. The **Land Ordinance of 1785** called for surveyors to stake out six by six mile plots called **townships**. Furthermore, the **Northwest Ordinance of 1787** outlined how the Northwest Territory would be **governed**. It said that when there were 5,000 land owning men in an area, they could elect an assembly for self government. When there were 60,000 people, they could apply for statehood. Rights to explore land, have freedom of religion, and have a trial by jury were guaranteed to all. The Northwest ordinance was probably the most successful piece of legislation that came from the Articles.

There were also **problems** with the Articles. The Confederation Congress found that they had **no power** to stop Britain and Spain from barring American ships near their territories. They also had a hard time competing with Britain in the fur trade. America’s ability to **compete economically** was very weak.

Making things worse, America couldn’t pay back **war debts**, because the Confederation Congress couldn’t **collect taxes**. American soldiers, unhappy at not being paid, staged a protest in Pennsylvania. Government officials were forced to flee the city.

In 1786, delegates from 5 states met in Maryland to discuss ways to **promote trade** in America. Although they came up with good ideas, making those changes would require them to amend the Articles of Confederation, which the national government did not have the power to do. That in combination with the series of revolts among citizens, made leaders realize it was time for change.

In 1787, the **Constitutional Convention was held in Philadelphia**. There were 55 delegates, and they became known as the **framers**, or Founding Fathers of our nation.

One of the principles that came out of this convention was **popular sovereignty**, which is a government system in which the **people rule**. This became a central idea that helped create our Constitution.

**Problems faced by the framers:**

Those at the convention realized that had to come up with a system of government that was **strong enough to protect people’s rights, but not so strong that it could be oppressive.**

One of the first problems they addressed was **how to set up the legislature**. The Virginia Plan proposed a government with **three branches**: the **legislative branch** to create the laws, an **executive branch** to enforce the laws, and a **judicial branch** to interpret the laws. The branches would operate under a system of **checks and balances**, so that no branch would become too powerful.

The **Virginia Plan** also said that the legislative branch should have representatives based on the **population** of a state. The smaller states did not like this part of the plan.

As an alternative, the **New Jersey Plan** set up a legislature where there was **equal representation**: each state got one vote. Larger states opposed this plan.

To solve this problem, framers decided on the **Great Compromise.** It held that there would be a **bicameral legislature**, meaning two houses. In the **Senate**, each state would have **equal representation**. In the **House of Representatives**, each state would have representation based on **population**.

Another problem faced by the framers was **slavery**. Were slaves to be counted as part of a population? Southern states wanted slaves to be counted as part of their population to increase their number of representatives in Congress. However, the north, who had few slaves, said that since slaves weren’t citizens, they should not count towards the population.

The agreement reached over this issue is known as the **Three-Fifths Compromise**. Three-fifths of the slave population would be counted for taxation and representation purposes. It was also decided that the **Slave Trade** from Africa was to be **banned as of 1808**.

On September 17, 1787, the delegates signed the Constitution. Now it had to be ratified by the states. **Federalists** supported the ratification of the Constitution. They believed in a system of government called **Federalism**, where power is **shared between the central government and the states.** Federalists James Madison, Alexander Hamilton, and John Jay wrote the **Federalist Papers**, a series of essays in support of ratifying the Constitution.

 **Antifederalists** opposed the ratification of the Constitution. They thought that it took too much power away from the states and did not guarantee the rights of the people. They feared that the freedom won from the Revolution might be lost. In order to ratify the Constitution, Antifederalists wanted to include a **Bill of Rights**. Federalists agreed to add the Bill of Rights if Antifederalists would ratify the Constitution. **James Madison**, considered the father of the Constitution, also submitted the Bill of Rights, or the **first ten amendments** to the constitution. They guarantee basic individual freedoms, including freedom of religion. This was very important to Americans, since many of them came to America to avoid religious persecution. The Bill of Rights also made the constitution a **living document**, one that can be amended to reflect changes in society. That is why the Constitution is still **relevant** today.