



Early Attempts at Government

The Articles of Confederation to the
Constitutional Convention



The Articles of Confederation

- Major Points
 - Established Confederation Congress
 - Placed Majority of power with the states
 - Each state with one vote
- Submitted to Congress in 1777
 - Took a while to get approval
 - States wanted to be sure it would be fair



Weakness of the Articles

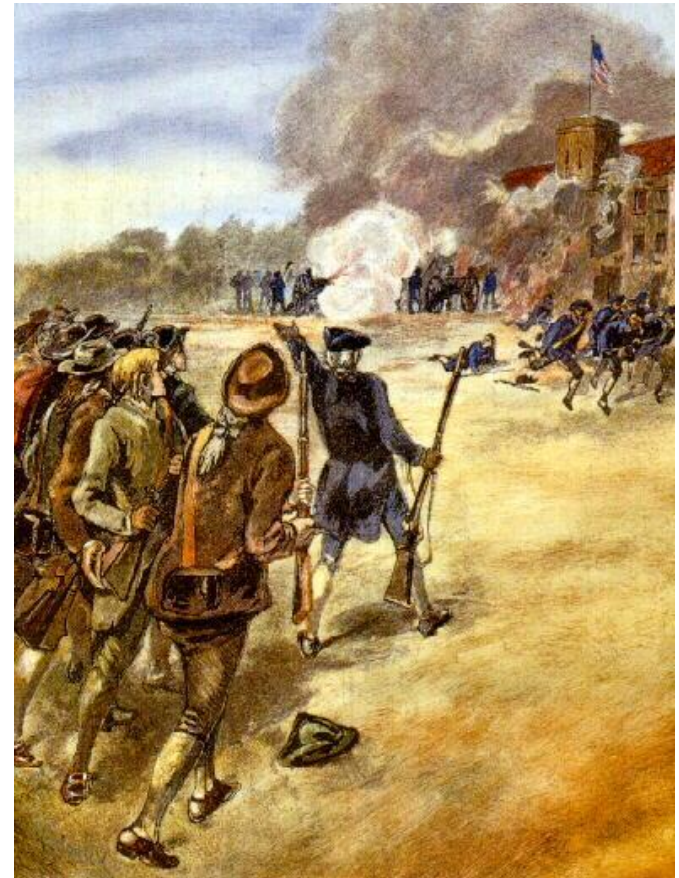
- Congress could not establish a currency
- Could not Levy taxes
- Could not collect money from states
 - Could not repay war debt
- Almost impossible to amend articles





Shay's Rebellion

- Farmers Angry they could not pay their debts shut down the courts
- Showed problems with state's power
 - “A little rebellion now and then is a good thing”
 - Led to a push for stronger central government





Constitutional Convention

- 1787 – Delegates met in Philadelphia to come up with new government
 - Virginia Plan – Three Branches with a powerful president
 - New Jersey Plan – Favored a stronger congress



Compromises

- Great Compromise - Combined the New Jersey Plan and the Virginia Plan
- Federalism – Divided power between the Federal Government and the States
- Three-Fifths – Solved question of how to count slaves in the south



The Anti-Federalists

- Did not want the new constitution to be ratified
 - It gave too much power to the national government
 - Allowed for a standing army in peace time
 - No Bill of rights
 - Executive Branch had too much power
 - ‘Necessary and proper’ clause



The Federalists

- Defended the new constitution
 - Needed a strong central government
 - The separation of powers into three independent branches protected the rights of the people.
 - No one branch could be too powerful
 - We can't list all rights so don't limit them by restricting them to a list



Ratification

- By 1788 nine states had ratified the new constitution
 - Ten were needed to ratify
- A Bill of Rights was promised once the constitution was ratified
 - Bringing in three more states
 - Constitution Ratified June 21, 1788