

### Problems with the Confederation

- By Late 1780s Americans were angry with the Confederation and how it dealt with instability economic problems and the lack of power it had during Shay's Rebellion
- Members of the Confederation left Philadelphia in 1783 to avoid soldiers demanding their pay
- They moved to Princeton, New Jersey from there to Annapolis, Maryland and from there to New York in 1785
- Throughout this moving representatives were often absent making the Treaty of Paris to end to revolutionary war hard to ratify
- Only 8 state voted on the **Northwestern Ordinance**

### The Constitution

- By 1787 a new government was created with the laws of the Constitution of the United States
- It was a huge achievement because it lasted over 200 years as one of the best in the world
- Writers included Benjamin Franklin, George Washington, and James Madison
- Although almost all thought the Constitution was a great document it was interpreted differently and that led to arguments

### Support for a strong national government

- In the 1780's there was a support a national government that could deal with the nation's problems specifically economical ones
- Soldiers wanted pensions
- Manufacturers wanted to replace state tarris with a high national duty
- Merchant wanted a national commerce policy as opposed to the individual ones for each state.
- Land owners wanted to get rid of Native Americans
- Debt collectors wanted to stop the over inflation of currency which made debts easy to pay off and left them with less value than they loaned
- Large landowners fearing events like **Shays rebellion** repeating wanted protection against mobs
- By 1786 there was a unanimous call for more national power and the power to tax in particular

### Changing the Confederation

- Alexander Hamilton was able to summon the support for a **Constitutional Convention** with the help of George Washington
- The convention was attended by delegates from all states except for Rhode Island
- George was elected to lead and the convention was shut off to the media
- Each colony got one vote and in order for something to pass it only needed the majority of the votes
- Edmund Randolph proposed a government with an Executive, Legislative, and Judicial branch
- This was very different but since the delegates so desperately sought change they approved the resolution

- The Virginia plan called for the national legislature to consist of two houses a lower one with where states would be represented in proportion to their population and the upper one having representatives voted in from the lower house meaning it was unlikely for a thief to be a representative in the upper one from a smaller populated state
- This angered the smaller states who got the bad end of the proposal so William Paterson proposed one legislature with completely even representation and gave congress power to tax and regulate commerce
- Patersons bill was tabled
- The Virginia plan was popular and so the big states made a compromise to get the smaller states on board. They proposed upper house seats would be voted on by state legislatures so that each state was always represented
- There was lots of arguing between states that did and didn't use slavery over how they should be taxed
- There was lots of arguing between the representatives so on July 2nd a Grand Committee was formed
- They wrote **the Great Compromise** which said the lower house would be represented proportionally to population with slaves counting as 3/5 of a person and the upper house having 2 members from each state
- This was accepted by the Convention on July 16 1787
- They compromised again and agreed the congress could not tax exports and slavery remained legal
- They did not define citizenship and what it meant.

#### Constitution of 1787

- James Madison raised the topic of sovereignty and limiting power
- The question was raised had could both the state and the nation have supreme power. Madison reasoned all power comes from the people
- The Constitution said it had supreme power over states
- The federal government was to have broad powers including the power to tax, regulate commerce control currency and pass laws that were necessary for carrying out responsibilities
- They also created the system of **checks and balances** where Congress which had 2 chambers the **House of Representatives** and the **Senate** which both had to agree on a law before it was passed and the president would have the power to veto the laws
- They also made it so people could only elect members of the
- This was all designed to avoid tyranny
- The Constitution was signed on september 17 1787 by 39 delegates

#### Federalists and Antifederalists

- The Constitution written by the delegates was very different and they were worried it would be hard to rait since it needed unanimous approval
- The changed thing so that the Constitution specified would come into existence if 9 of 13 states ratified it but only in those states
- With the exception of Rhode Island in 1788 state committees were formed to decide whether or not to vote yes on the new Constitution

- Federalist had a biggest advantage than the Anti Federalists due to their organization and support from George Washington, Benjamin Franklin, Alexander Hamilton, James Madison and John Jay.
- Hamilton, Madison and Jay wrote the Federalist papers which was a set of essays pleading the pro constitution case
- The Anti-Federalists wanted to stay very true to the principles of the revolution and feared tyrannical center of government
- They said the Constitution said it would raise taxes, get rid of states, be dictatorial, and favor the rich.
- They didn't like the fact there was no bill of rights and thought the government would not protect the rights of the people
- The Constitution was ratified by Delaware, New Jersey, Georgia, Massachusetts, Pennsylvania, New York, and Virginia

#### First Elections and Bills

- The first elections happened in 1789 and George Washington was the first president with John Adams as vice president
- Congress approved 12 amendments in 1789
- 9 kept Congress from interfering with rights and other reserved rights for the states
- The congress formed 5 departments, war, and state.
- They made the office of the attorney general, and postmaster general.

#### Federalists vs Republicans

- For the first 12 years to government was dominated by the Federalists
- The group was primarily run by Alexander Hamilton
- Hamilton proposed take responsibility for public debt he also proposed they take responsibility for the state's debt
- Hamilton got some resistance on this but formed a compromise where they moved the capital more southern ward in exchange for support
- The Bank of the United States started in 1791
- Hamilton created a national bank to provide loans and currency and give the government a safe place to keep federal funds. It would help with tax collection and government expenditures as well as keep up the prices of bonds.
- Hamilton proposed taxes on distillers and imports he wrote about this in the Report on Manufactures
- Federalists wanted a wealthy ruling class, independent commercial economy, and a thriving industrial sector
- When Hamilton's acts went into effect it did sell well and made lots of people money but farmers complained they had a disproportionate amount of the tax burden on top of the distilling tax.
- The goal of the constitution was to avoid having parties but people feared Hamilton and his farmers were a party
- Their critics felt to even the score they must form their own party, the **Republican Party**
- Republicans tried their hardest to forage political influence.

- Both the the Republicans and the Federalists would not admit they were a party and both thought they represented the interest of the people
- This created the first party system
- Federalists were larger in the Northeast and in southern seaports while the republican dominated western and southern rural areas.

#### Establishing National Sovereignty

- There were early problems with the Constitution like the farmers who refused to pay the whiskey tax and harassed tax collectors in 1794. Washington quickly squashed the rebellion
- Federalists governments gained the favor of whiskey rebels by accepting their new territories as states of the Union
- New states to join the Union were North Carolina, Rhode Island, Vermont, Kentucky, North Carolina and Tennessee
- **Ordinances of 1784-1787** created conflict with Native Americans though America won it proved America did not control all of the land in the west
- There was no real legal standings for Native Americans as they did not count in determining population but the US did have to respect Treaties signed by the Confederation.
- Britain sent over a minister to America in 1791 because Madison and the Republicans were threatening trade restrictions on British ships
- When the French went to war with Britain, America claimed neutrality
- Edmond Genet a frenchman saied into Charlestown and made plan to outfit his warships and he encouraged Americans to become French privateers and paid George Rogers Clark to lead an attack against southern Spanish lands this angered Washington because it bordered on non-neutrality
- In 1794 British naval ships took hundred of American ships participating in trade with the French West Indies
- Going to war with Britain would hurt trade
- John Jay was elected to get Britain to compensate for the stolen goods and withdraw from the frontiers
- Jay did not secure this but it did settle conflict with the British in what was known as the controversial Jay's Treaty
- As a result Thomas Pinckney negotiated a treaty with the Spanish know as **Pinckney's Treaty** which allowed Americans to use the mouth of the Mississippi River and required Spanish Authorities to prevent Native American in Florida from launching attacks toward the US

#### The Downfall of the Federalists

- George Washington retired from office in 1797 and gave a **Farewell Address** during which he attacked republicans and especially with those who were working the French to undermine the Federalist agenda
- Jefferson was the candidate for the republicans and John Adams was for the Federalists
- Adams won and Jefferson became vice president behind him
- Adams ruled over a country divided into parties

- Relationships with France got worse as French ships captured American ships
- Charles Pinckney was refused as a representative when he went to France
- Adams made an attempt at smoothing things over by sending a committee over to France but French Prince Talleyrand demanded a loan and bribe before negotiations could begin. The committee refused
- Adams told Congress to prepare for war
- Adams shared the **XYZ Affair** which told the story and angered colonists mightily
- It was technically not a real war but Adams got Congress to cut off all trade with France
- A navy was formed in 1798 which captured 85 French ships. This essentially made Britain and the US allies
- France chose to conciliate before the conflict grew any larger and agreed to a treaty that establish new commercial arrangement thereby ending the dispute.
- The Federalists had gained support and power through the struggle with France and used this to try to beat the Republican party by publishing the **Alien and Seditions Acts**
- The Alien acts made it harder for foreigners to become American citizens
- The Sedition acts allowed the governments to prosecute anyone trying to start rebellion
- Adams signed the new laws but did not act on them. He didn't deport any aliens and he stopped Federalist from launching a campaign against the Republicans
- Republicans looked to reverse the acts using state legislatures
- The **Virginia and Kentucky resolutions** which claimed if the central government had exceeded their power the states had the right to nullify the law
- Kentucky and Virginia did nullify these laws and this brought fighting between Federalists and Republicans to a larger more national scale
- In the 1800 presidential race the same candidates represented the same parties. The election was close and very bitter. It came down to a decision from the House of Representative who Jefferson.
- The **Judiciary act** in 1801 kept the Judicial branch largely Federalist but even so Republican were now dominant

#### Crash Course

- The first American government was the **Articles of Confederation** and it was weak and ineffective due to the fact 9 votes were needed to pass laws and 13 were required to make amendments
- It was created by colonists to be weak because they feared tyranny
- It was only useful for war
- It's biggest accomplishment was the **Northwest Ordinance** of 1787 which set up a process for 5 new states between the Ohio and Mississippi river
- It acknowledged Native Americans had claim to the land and they had to be treated better if there was going to be peace
- It also outlawed slavery in all 5 of these new states
- It could not collect taxes

- There was massive debts after the war and so there were taxes to pay for it but without national help the states had to do it individually and it made trade very difficult
- During **Shays rebellion** farmers took over courts to prevent them from being foreclosed on. The rebellion was stopped but people saw the Confederations lack of power in the situation as a red flag
- It worried the rich that giving too much democratic power to the lower class could prove harmful
- There was an attempt to revise the articles in Annapolis, Maryland in 1786 but only 6 states sent delegates
- They met the next year with 55 in attendance and wrote a new charter and our constitution in 1786
- They agreed on having a judicial, a legislative, and an executive branch and should be republican and use representatives
- Larger states liked Madison's plan where there was a 2 party system with a high and low house and the low house would be proportional to population but Smaller states preferred the New Jersey plan which called for completely equal representation
- Instead the states reached a compromise where there would be a house of representatives with representation proportional to population
- There was controversy over population and if slaves counted or not but a compromise we reached where slaves counted as 3/5 of a human being
- They supported separation of power and federalism. They divided the country into Executive, Legislative and Judicial branches and incorporated Check and Balances which allowed each branch to check the power of the other
- Federalism meant power should be in both state and national governments
- For the rich farmer to secure their assets they made it so senators were elected by the state legislatures
- They also invented the **electoral college**
- The federalist papers were written to help convince delegates to ratify the Constitution
- There were also Anti-federalists who were supported more by farmers and common people. They were very afraid of a strong government
- The Constitution was eventually ratified