

**A.P. GOVERNMENT**

Unit 1  
Foundation of American Government

**“Constitutional Convention”**


Mr. Ahlberg

Notes #4



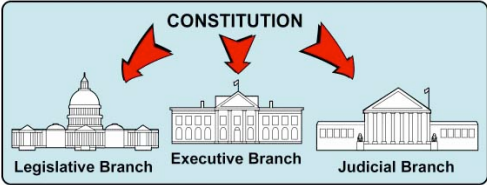

**A.P. GOVERNMENT** Philadelphia Convention

- 55 from 12 States Delegates
  - Arrived in Philadelphia between April and May
  - Original purpose
    - Revise the Articles of Confederation
- James Madison (VA) had other ideas
  - Greeted each delegate
  - Proposed creating new plan of government
  - Other notable attendees
    - Ben Franklin
    - George Washington
  - Notable missing
    - Thomas Jefferson
    - John Adams



**A.P. GOVERNMENT** Separation of Powers

- Prevents an all-powerful ruling body
  1. Legislature – passes law (Congress)
  2. Executive – enforces law (President)
  3. Judiciary – interprets law (Supreme Court)



**A.P. GOVERNMENT** Two “Revision” Plans

- Virginia Plan
  - Favored large states
    - Representation would be based on state population
  - Strong central government
  - Bicameral (two house) legislature
    - larger house elected by the people
      - House of Representatives
    - smaller house that would be selected by larger house
      - Senate


**A.P. GOVERNMENT** Two “Revision” Plans

- New Jersey Plan
  - Agreed with strong central government...BUT
  - Congress would be unicameral (one house)
    - Representation would be equal for all states
  - Did not want large population states to dominate the legislature


**A.P. GOVERNMENT** Great Compromise

- A bicameral legislature
  - The House of Representatives membership would be apportioned according to the state populations
    - Elected by popular vote
  - The Senate would have two members from each state,
    - Elected by the state legislature
      - The 17<sup>th</sup> Amendment changed this to a popular vote



**A.P. GOVERNMENT** **Three-fifths Compromise**

- The question of counting slaves as part of the population was debated between northern and southern states.
- A compromise was reached
  - The South could count 3/5 of the slaves living in a state toward their population
  - The North secured the end of the importation of new slaves by 1808.



**A.P. GOVERNMENT** **Other Agreements**

- **President**
  - A chief executive who had the power to approve laws or could veto them
  - Congress was given the power to override a veto
- **Supreme Court**
  - Originally created to arbitrate disputes between the President and Congress as well as the Federal Government and the States
  - Serve for Life Terms




**A.P. GOVERNMENT** **Amending the Constitution**

- Amendments are proposed by a 2/3 vote in each house of Congress
- Proposed Amendments are sent to each state to be ratified (accepted)
- Must be ratified in at least 3/4 of the state legislatures
  - Meant to be difficult, but not impossible
  - Designed to require action from both the Federal and State governments