

Federalists vs. Anti-Federalists Views of the Constitution

Background Information

When the leaders of the United States realized the Articles of Confederation needed revising, everyone had an opinion on how the government should be established and where the power should lie. While writing the Constitution two major parties developed: Federalists and Anti-Federalists, each believing the nation should be run according to their plan. The following questions will prompt you to consider both parties and their beliefs on how to form the new government. Please write out your answers on a separate piece of paper (and yes, you need complete sentences).

Document 1:

I would propose next that in addition to the present federal powers, the national Government should be armed with positive and compleat [complete] authority in all cases which require uniformity; such as the regulation of trade, including the right of taxing both exports and imports, the fixing the terms and forms of naturalization...

James Madison to George Washington, April 16, 1787

1. Who wrote this statement? Who was he writing to?
 2. What type of powers does the author believe the national government should “be armed with positive and complete authority”?
 3. What are two examples of the powers?
 4. Does the author support or oppose the Constitution?
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Document 2:

...After such a declaration, what security does the Constitution of the several States afford the liberty of the press and other invaluable personal rights, not provided for by the new plan? --Does not his sweeping the clause subject everything to the control [control] of Congress?

In the plan of the Confederation of 1778, now existing, it was thought proper by the Article the 2d, to declare that each State retains its sovereignty, freedom and independence, and every power, jurisdiction and right, which is not by this Confederation expressly delegated to the United States in Congress assembled.

George Byran

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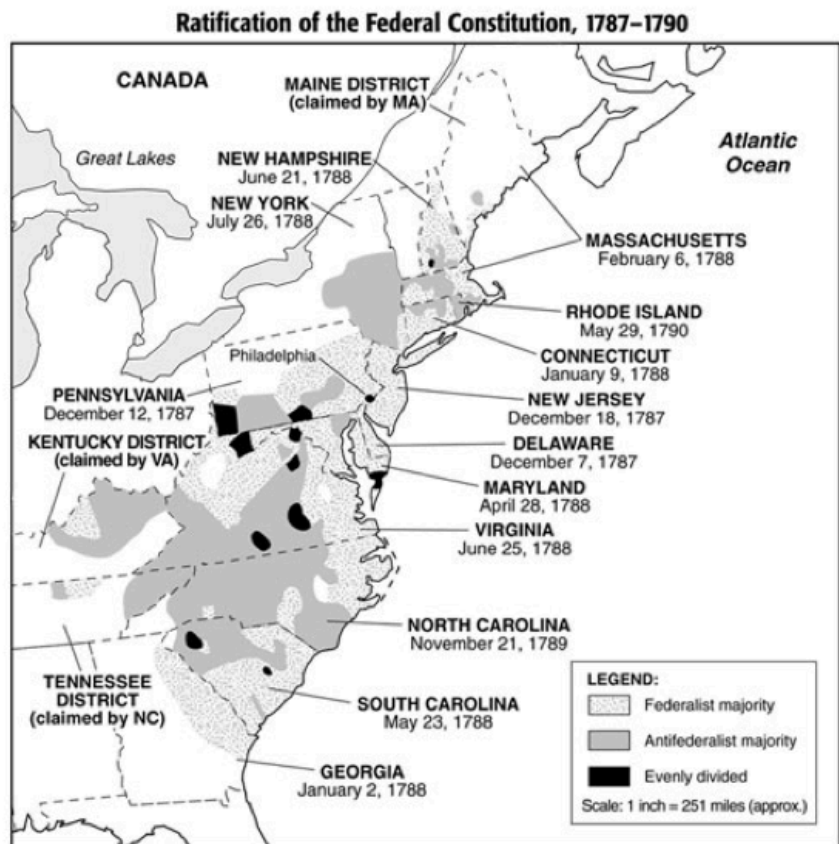
5. Who wrote this article? In what publications was it originally printed? When was it originally printed?
6. What rights were not provided for in the new plan [the Constitution]?
7. If these rights were taken away, everything will be subject to the control of which group?
8. What did the states retain under the Articles of Confederation?
9. Does the author support or oppose the Constitution?

Document 3:

	Federalists	Anti-Federalists
Leaders	Alexander Hamilton John Adams George Washington	Thomas Jefferson James Madison
Types of People that supported the Party	Large landowners Judges Lawyers Leading Clergymen (preachers) Merchants	Small farmers Small landowners Debtors
Main Beliefs	The Constitution should have implied powers. Want a strong federal government	Believe in limited federal powers-only enumerated powers (specifically stated powers) Want strong state governments

10. Which group was supported by the “rich”? Which group was supported by the “poor”?
11. Which group supported a strong federal government?
12. Which group wanted the states to have more power?

Document 4:



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13. In which states were most of the Federalists located?
14. In which states were most of the Anti-Federalists located?
15. What were the first three states to ratify the Constitution? Were these states considered Federalists or Anti-Federalists?
16. Why do you think it took Virginia and New York so long to ratify the Constitution?

Document 5:

The Articles of Confederation and the Constitution

ARTICLES	CONSTITUTION
EXECUTIVE BRANCH	
No executive to administer and enforce legislation; Congress has sole authority to govern. Executive committee to oversee government when Congress is out of session	President administers and enforces federal laws.
LEGISLATIVE BRANCH	
A unicameral (one-house) legislature Each state had one vote, regardless of population. Nine votes (of the original 13) to enact legislation	A bicameral (two-house) legislature Each state has equal representation in the Senate; each state is represented according to population in the House of Representatives. Simple majority to enact legislation
JUDICIAL BRANCH	
No national court system Congress to establish temporary courts to hear cases of piracy	National court system, headed by the Supreme Court Courts to hear cases involving national laws, treaties, and the Constitution as well as cases between states, between citizens of different states, or between a state and citizen of another state
OTHER MATTERS	
Admission to the Confederation by 9 votes (of 13) Amendment of the Articles by unanimous vote The states retained independence.	Congress to admit new states; all must have a republican form of government Amendment of the Constitution by two-thirds vote of both houses of Congress or by national convention, followed by ratification by three fourths of the states The states accept the Constitution as the supreme law of the land.

17. Did the federal government have more power under the Articles of Confederation or the Constitution?
 18. What about the Articles of Confederation caused problems for the United States?
 19. What are 5 differences between the Articles of Confederation and the Constitution?
 20. Would the Federalists support the Articles of Confederation or the Constitution? Explain.
 21. Would the Anti-federalists support the Articles of Confederation or the Constitution? Explain.
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