

"We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness. — That to secure these rights, Governments are instituted among Men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed, — That whenever any Form of Government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the Right of the People to alter or to abolish it, and to institute new Government, laying its foundation on such principles and organizing its powers in such form, as to them shall seem most likely to effect their Safety and Happiness."

-*Declaration of Independence* (1776)

1. Evaluate this statement: The constitutional settlement (ratification of the Constitution) was a betrayal of the ideals of the American Revolution.

Document 1

The Federalist #6, Alexander Hamilton (1787)

"A man must be far gone in Utopian speculations who can seriously doubt, that if these States should either be wholly disunited, or only united in partial confederacies, the subdivisions into which they might be thrown would have frequent and violent contests with each other. To presume a want of motives for such contests, as an argument against their existence, would be to forget that men are ambitious, vindictive and rapacious. To look for a continuation of harmony between a number of independent unconnected sovereignties, situated in the same neighbourhood, would be to disregard the uniform course of human events, and to set at defiance the accumulated experience of ages....Perhaps however a reference, tending to illustrate the general principle, may with propriety be made to a case which has lately happened among ourselves. If SHAYS had not been a *desperate debtor* it is much to be doubted whether Massachusetts would have been plunged into a civil war."

Document 2

Speech of Patrick Henry (1788)

"Mr. Chairman ... I rose yesterday to ask a question which arose in my own mind. When I asked that question, I thought the meaning of my interrogation was obvious: The fate of this question and of America may depend on this: Have they said, we, the States? Have they made a proposal of a compact between states? If they had, this would be a confederation: It is otherwise most clearly a consolidated government. The question turns, Sir, on that poor little thing-the expression, *We, the people*, instead of the *States*, of America. I need not take much pains to show that the principles of this system are extremely pernicious, impolitic, and dangerous. Is this a monarchy, like England-a compact between prince and people, with checks on the former to secure the liberty of the latter? Is this a Confederacy, like Holland-an association of a number of independent states, each of which retains its individual sovereignty? It is not a democracy, wherein the people retain all their rights securely. Had these principles been adhered to, we should not have been brought to this alarming transition, from a Confederacy to a consolidated Government."

Document 3

Excerpt from *Founding Brothers*, Joseph Ellis (2000)

The American Revolution thus entered a second phase and the constitutional settlement of 1787–1788 became a second “founding moment,” alongside the original occasion of 1776. The first founding declared American independence; the second, American nationhood. The incompatibility of these two foundings is reflected in the divisive character of the scholarship on the latter. Critics of the Constitution, then and now, have condemned it as a betrayal of the core principles of the American Revolution, an American version of France’s Thermidorian reaction. Strictly speaking, they were and are historically correct. Defenders of the Constitution, then and now, have saluted it as a sensible accommodation of liberty to power and a realistic compromise with the requirements of a national domain. That has turned out, over time, to be correct, though at the time even the advocates were not sure.

Document 4

Article I, Section II, Clause III of the *Constitution of the United States* (1787)

“Representatives and direct Taxes shall be apportioned among the several States which may be included within this Union, according to their respective Numbers, which shall be determined by adding to the whole Number of free Persons, including those bound to Service for a Term of Years, and excluding Indians not taxed, three fifths of all other Persons.”

Document 5

A painting depicting George Washington and his army as they prepare to respond to the Whiskey Rebellion, Frederick Kemmelmeyer (1794)



Document 6

An Act for the Gradual Abolition of Slavery, A Law Enacted by the State of New York (1799)

Be it *enacted* by the people of the state of New York represented in Senate and Assembly, That any Child born of a slave within this State after the fourth day of July next, shall be *deemed* and *adjudged* to be born free: Provided nevertheless that such Child shall be the *servant* of the legal *proprietor* of his or her mother until such servant if a male shall arrive at the age of twenty eight years, and if a female at the age of twenty-five years.

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