

Federal Constitution Making

American Heritage Discussion Series for Learners with Littles
Caregivers' Conversation

Essential Questions

1. What ideas and events influenced the delegates at the 1787 Constitutional Convention?

Articles of Confederation

Constitutional Convention

2. What were some of the arguments supporting the new federal constitution?

Ratification

Iroquois Confederacy

Articles of Confederation

Essential Questions:

- What issues emerged after the War of Independence that made the American victory and the union precarious?
- What governmental issues did the new United States have under the Articles of Confederation?

The Articles of Confederation left each state free

5:32 / 11:15

The Articles of Confederation - Constitutional Convention - Extra History - Part 4

Constitutional Convention

Excerpts from the Debates in the 1787 Constitutional Convention
concerning the Slave Importation Clause



Essential Question: Was it possible to create a union that included the southern states without making accommodations for slavery?

- What were some of the views about slavery some of the delegates expressed in the Constitutional Convention while debating the possible end to the Transatlantic Slave Trade?

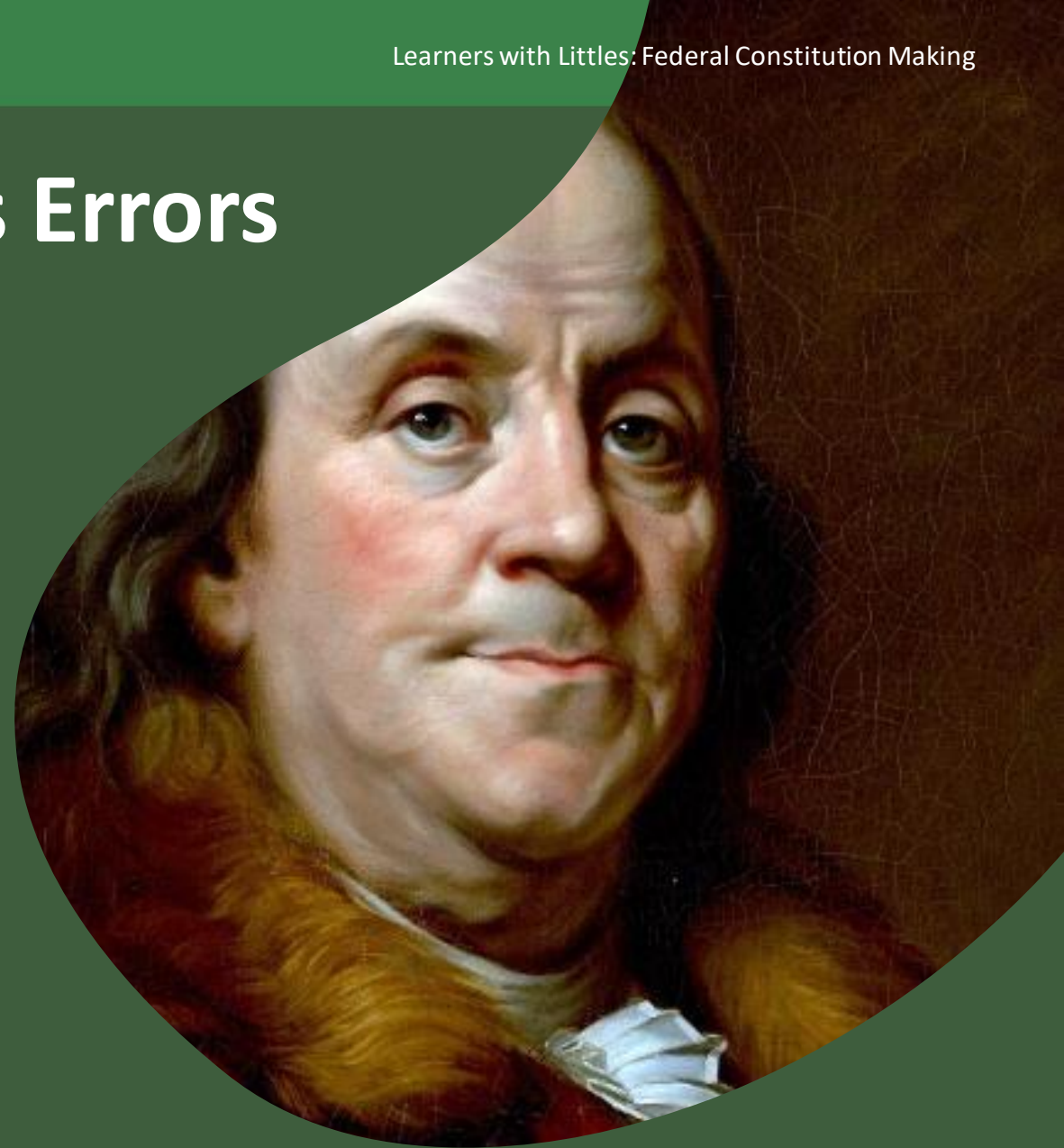


Franklin on the Constitution's Errors

Closing Speech at the Constitutional Convention

Essential Question: How does Benjamin Franklin encourage support for the new constitution?

- Why does Franklin “give his consent” to the new federal constitution, while also acknowledging it contains errors?
- What does Franklin encourage others to do while considering the proposed constitution?



Brutus No. 1

A free republic cannot long subsist over a country of the great extent of the American states (only local government protects rights of the citizens)

Antifederalists:

Suspicious of

- Centralized government removed from the people
- Supremacy clause
- Necessary and proper clause
- No bill of rights



Getting the Constitution Ratified Back Home

Excerpt from Federalist 10 by Publius

Essential Question: What are some arguments that supported the proposed constitution?

- What is the main argument of Federalist 10?
- What does Federalist 10 say about the concept of plurality in the extended republic?
- What does this famous line from Federalist 10 mean: “Liberty is to faction what air is to fire, an aliment without which it instantly expires. But it could not be less folly to abolish liberty, which is essential to political life, because it nourishes faction, than it would be to wish the annihilation of air, which is essential to animal life, because it imparts to fire its destructive agency.”

Ratification of the Constitution

Votes of State Ratifying Conventions

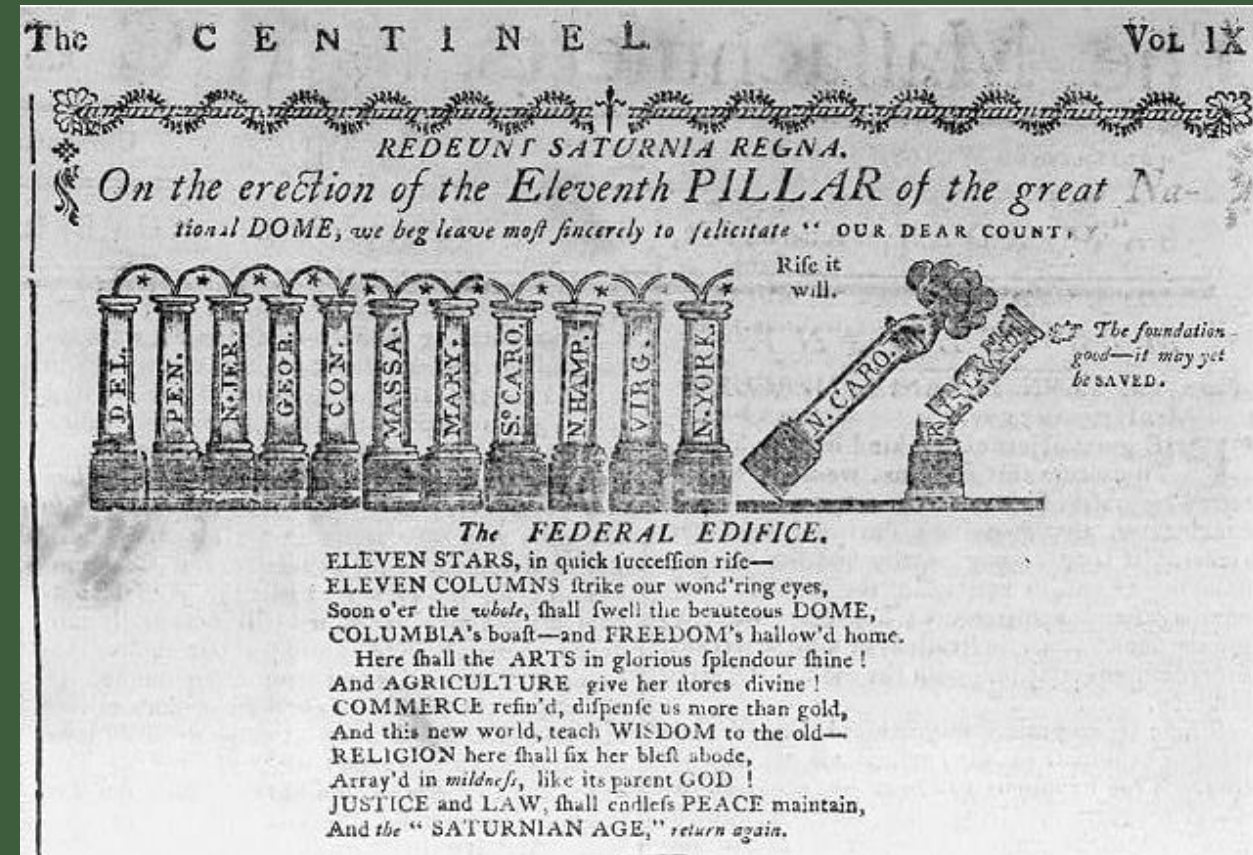
State	Date	For	Against
Delaware	December 1787	30	0
Pennsylvania	December 1787	46	23
New Jersey	December 1787	38	0
Georgia	January 1788	26	0
Connecticut	January 1788	128	40
Massachusetts	February 1788	187	168
Maryland	April 1788	63	11
South Carolina	May 1788	149	73
New Hampshire	June 1788	57	47
Virginia	June 1788	89	79
New York	July 1788	30	27
North Carolina	November 1789	194	77
Rhode Island	May 1790	34	32

Getting the Constitution Ratified Back Home

Excerpt from Federalist 51 by Publius

Essential Question: What are some arguments that supported the proposed constitution?

- What is the main argument of Fed 51?
- What does this famous line from Federalist 51 mean: *“If men were angels, no government would be necessary. If angels were to govern men, neither external nor internal controls on government would be necessary. In framing a government which is to be administered by men over men, the great difficulty lies in this: you must first enable the government to control the governed; and in the next place oblige it to control itself.”*



The Great Peace Giver & The Great Law of Peace

The Peacemaker's Journey & The Great Law of Peace
by the Onondaga Historical Association, Senate Resolution 331 (1988)

Essential Question: What influence did the Haudenosaunee (Iroquois Confederacy) have on the U.S. Constitution?

- What is the founding story of the Haudenosaunee (Iroquois Confederacy)?
- What was The Great Law of Peace?
- How did the U.S. Senate recognize the influence of the Haudenosaunee (Iroquois Confederacy) on the U.S. Constitution?



The Great Peace Giver & The Great Law of Peace



Iroquois Confederacy (aka Haudenosaunee)



Iroquois Confederacy and the Framers

- When the Framers were looking for examples of successful government, the Iroquois Confederacy was one of the successful examples they knew about.
- Benjamin Franklin, George Washington, and John Adams each knew about the Iroquois Confederacy as an example of federalism when they were working on designing a new government for the United States.
- In 1988 the U.S. Senate officially recognized the influence of the Iroquois Confederacy on the Constitution.



Iroquois Confederacy and the Framers

100TH CONGRESS
2^D SESSION

H. CON. RES. 331

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

OCTOBER 5 (legislative day, SEPTEMBER 26), 1988

Received and referred to the Select Committee on Indian Affairs

OCTOBER 21 (legislative day, OCTOBER 18), 1988

Committee discharged

CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

To acknowledge the contribution of the Iroquois Confederacy of Nations to the development of the United States Constitution and to reaffirm the continuing government-to-government relationship between Indian tribes and the United States established in the Constitution.

Whereas the original framers of the Constitution, including, most notably, George Washington and Benjamin Franklin, are known to have greatly admired the concepts of the Six Nations of the Iroquois Confederacy;

Whereas the confederation of the original Thirteen Colonies into one republic was influenced by the political system developed by the Iroquois Confederacy as were many of the democratic principles which were incorporated into the Constitution itself; and

Preamble

We the People of the United States, in Order to form a **more perfect Union**, establish **Justice**, insure **domestic Tranquility**, provide for the **common defense**, promote the **general Welfare**, and **secure the Blessings of Liberty** to ourselves and our **Posterity**, do ordain and establish this Constitution for the United States of America.



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