

A historical painting depicting a large assembly of men in 18th-century attire, likely the Continental Congress, gathered in a grand hall with high ceilings and classical architecture. An American flag is visible on the right side of the scene.

Early Attempts at Government

Articles of Confederation to the
Constitutional Convention

The Articles of Confederation

- Submitted to Congress in 1777
 - Took a while to get approval
 - States wanted to be sure it would be fair

Major Points

- Established Confederation Congress
 - Equal Representation for States
- Placed majority of power with states
 - Wanted to limit control of Central Government

Establishing the West

- Congress feared another war with natives
 - Settlers already pouring into western territory
- Land Ordinance of 1785
 - Set up rules on distributing land and establishing new states
- Northwest Ordinance of 1787
 - Established a government to oversee western lands



Conflicts with Europe

- Spanish
 - Afraid of American power , forbid trade with New Orleans
- British
 - Extended Navigation Acts
 - Wanted to weaken America
 - Wanted to make money back

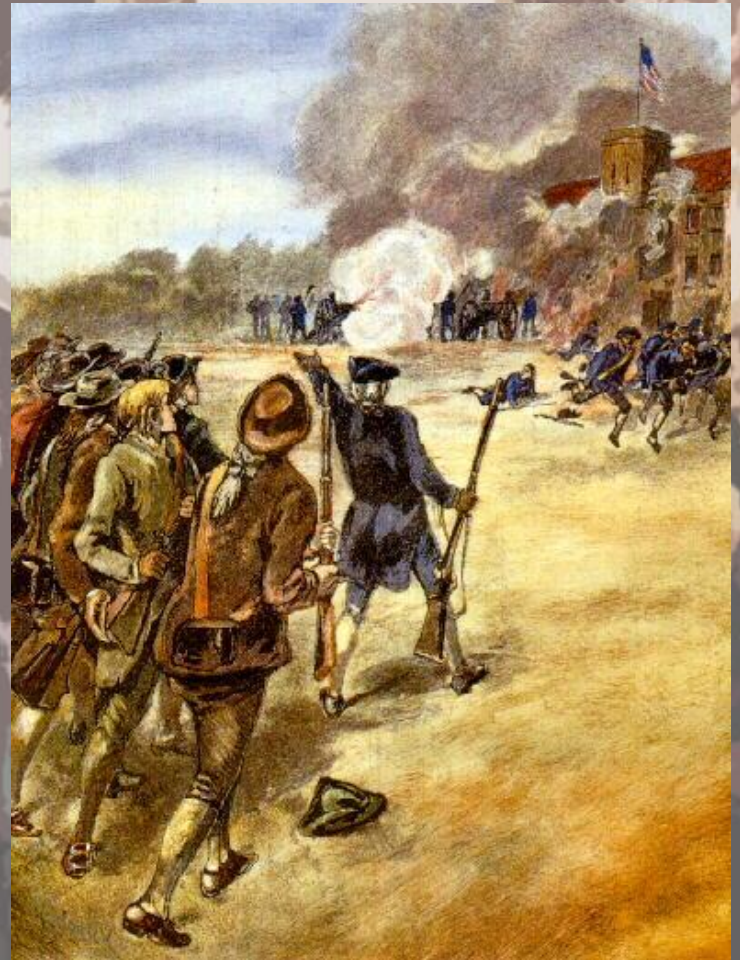
Weakness of the Articles

- Congress could not establish a currency
- Could not Levy taxes
- Could not collect money from states
 - Could not repay war debt
- Almost impossible to amend articles



“A little rebellion now and then is a good thing”

- Shay's Rebellion
 - Farmers angry they could not pay their debts shut down the courts
 - Showed problems with State's power
 - Led to push for stronger central government



Constitutional Convention

- 1787 – Delegates met in Philadelphia to come up with new government
 - Virginia Plan – Three Branches with a powerful president
 - New Jersey Plan – Favored a stronger congress

Compromises

- Great Compromise - Combined the New Jersey Plan and the Virginia Plan
- Federalism – Divided power between the Federal Government and the States
- Three-Fifths – Solved question of how to count slaves in the south

Homework

Using the book (pages 147,150-152) list the arguments for, and against ratifying the Constitution.

