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# The Problems of the Articles of Confederation and The Constitution Convention

On October 19 1781 the American patriots defeated the British Army at the at the Battle of Yorktown forcing General Cornwallis to surrender after the treaty was signed on September of 1783 the war for independence had officially ended and America was now free from British control. However the colonist would soon realize that independence would be difficult to keep under control and America would now have to survive on its own as a new nation.

The war was over and Britain could no longer interfere in American affairs therefore many new adjustments were brought about by America's newfound of independence in spite of these favorable changes it came to the attention of many Americans that a central authority was needed to join the states together as a nation before the Declaration of Independence was signed a Continental congress appointed committee presented a plan of state unification on July 12 1776 this plan was called the articles of confederation and it was finally accepted in November of 1777 they were eventually ratified by all thirteen states in march 1781, unfortunately it was not long before several weaknesses were exposed in the articles after the revolutionary war the government of the united states owed 160 million dollars the articles of confederation did not allow the central government to tax in order to pay of this 160 million dollars they had to go out and ask the states for some money as the years went by the states payed less and less money and all of the sudden the debts kept staking and staking and the U.S. Owed people more and more money and the people that U.S. owed money to were Europe and other countries and the primary one was France, France wanted their money.

Another area of conflict involved trade when it came to any type of trade between states it was one state claim this type of over another state and there was no organizing central agency that would that had the power to say this is the way we should conduct commerce that was one of the reasons that they needed help was to regulate the trade between the states and they were it was Maryland Virginia that was instrumental in calling on George Washington to say we needed help in regulating trade between the states we need some organization many of the states are doing their own thing and we need to develop a system of organization out of this chaos and a lot of world countries were looking at states at this time of the article and saying "who do we deal with it who do we trade with do we trade with just one state at a time individually or do we trade with you as a county as a whole you represent a whole we don't really know who you are".

What demonstrated the problem of the articles the most were the events that led to shays rebellion a lot of men that fought the revolutionary war were small time farmers the banks are starting to foreclose on their farms and their taxes started getting higher and they couldn't pay the taxes so they felt that they were getting that the bankers were taking advantage of them and they turned to Daniel shays who had been a captain in the revolutionary war and Daniel shays was also one of these farmers and they got ahold of some muskets and some weapons and started to march on the capital of Massachusetts which was Springfield at at that point the government of Massachusetts raised a small army and they clashed and great concern not only Massachusetts but in other states at the time was the fact that there was no central government that they could appeal to and why it would happen in other states all of a sudden backward

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farmers got together and started to march on state government after this uprising it became clear to the confederation congress that the articles were in desperate need of change if America wish to avoid future disaster so the sates were asked to send delegates to a convention which would be held in Philadelphia in May of 1787 they realized what they were talking about was going to be very important so they posted guards at the door and they agreed not to talk about what was going on in the hall they whole purpose of meeting in Philadelphia was to draw up how to fix what was wrong with the articles and repair them and within the week they began to realize that there was so much to fix or repair that they said let's just start a brand new government let's pull in some of the articles of what we did in the second continental congress but let's put it all in and makeup a brand new government George Washington was elected to preside over the convention shortly after it commenced the Virginia delegates headed by Edmund Randolph presented their plan of government a large part of it was written and created by James Madison he was later called the father of the constitution they felt in the Virginia plan that if we had three branches they would each have their separate and individual responsibilities of duties but they would all be co-equal they wanted a government where the powers would be divided in the government itself so no one area could usurp the other parts of the government.

Instead of only having one body of legislators they needed two what is now call the senate and the house of representatives the problem they had was how many would get in Congress Virginia could carry a lot more weight to have a lot more people and when Virginia said you know for representation it should be based on a couple of things money and population and that was easy for them to say cause they had both William Patterson and New Jersey delegates proposed an alternate plan their answer to the Virginia plan on representation was totally the opposite equal distribution of votes one vote apiece at least have every state the same amount of votes so that there would be no more than any one state that would be in total control of this new government this went on because of course the small states wanted to be equal with the large states the large states that know we're going to getting this isn't right because we have more people when it seemed as though nothing could resolve the conflict over representation the Connecticut delegation led by Roger Sherman introduced a compromise later to be known as the great compromise.