

# **HISTORY OF GOVERNMENT**

**By  
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In the beginning, when man was in the hunting and gathering stage of development, he moved in groups for mutual protection. The leader was usually the best warrior or hunter, the one who could provide the most food. When man became farmers, to get a more reliable source of food, he had to protect his land from others. He had to organize with other farmers in his community for mutual protection.

As weapons for fighting developed, they became costly and demanded special training for their use. A group of special fighters became necessary. Farmers gathered in groups and supported a fighting class of defenders. The farmers had to supply food and weapons for their protectors. Thus began the warrior class who later became the nobility. The nobility became so powerful that they ended up being in control and ruled the land with few exceptions.

The first really form of self government was the Greek city states. Because large armies were needed to protect their lands, each Greek city had its own army and government even these cities had to cooperate when invading armies from the east arrived.

The Romans controlled their lands longer than anyone, @ 600 years. From 300 B.C. to about 300 A.D. Rome ruled not only its own land but most of the civilized known world at the time. There was no nobility in Rome. Anyone could rise up and become a leader. It did require wealth in the end to gain office.

When Rome fell to the northern European barbarians a void was left. To protect their land areas people developed fortifications, castles and keeps. A special fighting class had to be developed again to protect the land. They say that power corrupts and that absolute power corrupts absolutely. Those in the fortifications ruled the land and became the nobility. They intermarried and became the ruling class of Europe. All were subject to their rule.

Then along came the colonies in North America. They didn't like the German king sitting on the English throne. They didn't like the idea that they had to pay for the war against the French known as the French and Indian war. The added taxes in the colonies, imposed without representation in Parliament, was unacceptable. The colonies rebelled and with the help of the French defeated the British.

During the war the thirteen colonies had set up a very loose form of government called the Articles of Confederation. This arrangement was very weak. The states did not trust each other and kept most of the controls in the states. There was no President to carry out the laws passed by the Congress. There were no courts to settle disagreements. Congress could not collect taxes and had no money to pay its debts. States charged taxes on things

for sale from other states. Each state had its own money. Trade between people in different states was complicated and difficult.

In 1786 a group of political leaders asked that all 13 states send delegates to a convention to fix the Articles of Confederation. They met that summer in Philadelphia, the largest city in the colonies. They used the Pennsylvania State House at 5<sup>th</sup> and Chestnut. They were all leaders in their states; giants of their time and well educated land owners. The amazing thing was that they did not try to correct the Articles of Confederation but started right in to create an entirely different form of government.

They met in secret, closed windows, no press, in a very hot summer. Madison of Virginia kept a record of the proceedings. The biggest problems facing the delegates was how to balance the new government. They had large states and small states, farming states and industrial states, states that sold internationally and states that bought internationally.

What they came up with was government that was a compromise proposal by Roger Sherman of Connecticut. Congress would have two houses. In the Senate, each state gets two senators. In the House, representation is based on population. This agreement came to be called the great compromise. In fact, our entire government is a balance between the Congress, the Executive branch and the Judicial branch. Congress can pass laws but the Executive has to implement them and the Supreme Court can decide if they are fair. No one section of our government can run by itself.

What these men accomplished was unique in the world, a people with a self operating government.