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Republicanism: idea that government should be based on consent of the people

Republic: government in which citizens rule through elected representatives

The Colonies Are Independent - Now What?

The Articles of Confederation

The Articles of Confederation, America's first constitution, provided for a new central government under which the states gave up little of their power. For the states, the Articles of Confederation were a "firm alliance" in which each state retained its "sovereignty, freedom and independence." The Articles reflected the fear of a strong central government, like Great Britain's, and the desire of the individual states and the people to protect their rights.

Weaknesses of the Articles

Why a problem?

1. Congress could not collect taxes
↳ no \$ to operate govt.

2. Congress could not regulate trade
↳ no tariffs \$ + chaotic

3. Each state had one vote in Congress
↳ difficult to legislate

4. 9 out of 13 states needed to agree to pass law → IMPOSSIBLE

5. Articles could be amended if all states approved → IMPOSSIBLE

6. No executive branch to enforce laws of congress → lawless society

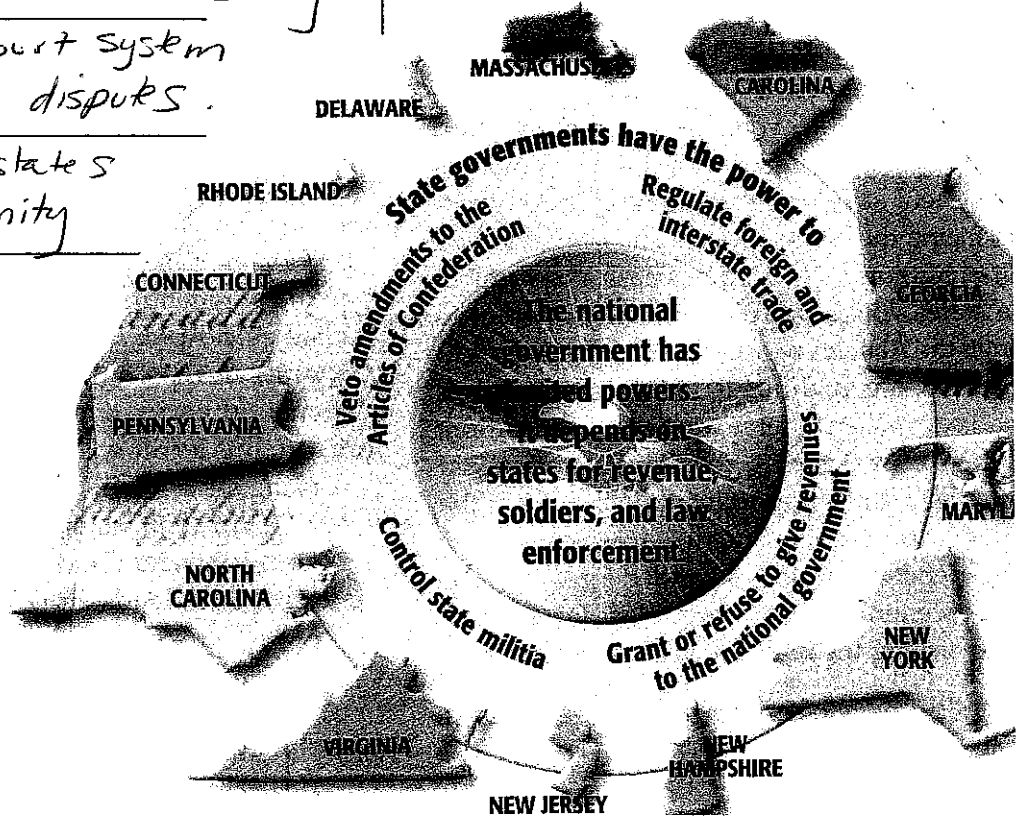
7. No national court system to settle legal disputes.

8. 13 separate states that lacked unity

Success of the Articles

1. Northwest Ordinance:

- Congress provided a procedure for dividing land into territories
- set requirements for admission of new states
- * greatest achievement
- * blueprint for expanding nation
- * put into Constitution



ARTICLES OF CONFEDERATION

Articles of Confederation:

1) Colonists fear a strong central government

2) Desire for individual States to have power

(NOT the USA at this point)

Confederation: Alliance of independent states; states give as much power as they want to the central govt., but keep most of the power

WEAK NATIONAL GOVERNMENT

ACHIEVEMENTS

WEAKNESSES

1) Ended the Am. Revolution

2) Treaty of Paris (ended war & set boundaries)

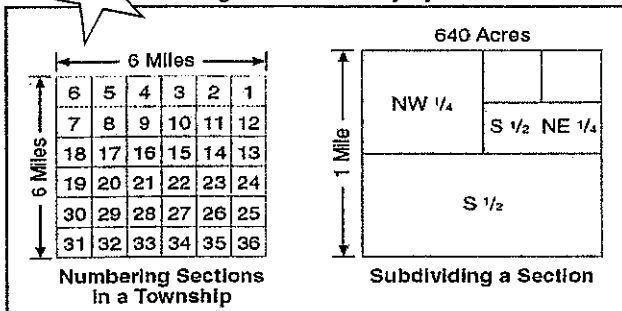
3) Land ordinance of 1785

4) Northwest Ordinance

In * Constitution of 1787

- set a pattern of development for NW territory
- set guidelines for new states to join

Land Ordinance of 1785 Rectangular Land Survey System



Source: Edgar B. Wesley, *Our United States: Its History in Maps*, Denoyer-Geppert (adapted)

- Too weak during critical time (need respect)
- No single currency
- National govt couldn't tax the people directly, but could ask for money
- no president to lead
- no judiciary
- all 13 states need to agree to change anything

+ Shays' Rebellion: farmers turn violent → fear of national collapse & mob rule

TOO MANY WEAKNESSES → "Amending" the Articles at the Constitutional Convention Philadelphia 1787

- prohibited slavery in NW territory

- vidw clip