

Topic 1:

Foundations of Government and Citizenship

Mrs. VanAlstine

Principles of Government

Think of this...

What would your life be like without government?

Who would protect you?

Who would provide education and public health services?

Who would protect the government?

...& SO MUCH MORE?!?!

Government does all of these things and more!

— — —
Government is the institution through which a society makes and enforces its public policies.

Public policies of a government are all of the things that a government decides to do.

- Taxation
- Defense
- Education
- Crime
- Healthcare
- Transportation
- Environment
- etc...

Governments must have power to carry out these public policies. Every government has and exercises **three kinds of power** (in some form):

1. **Legislative** - *make and frame public policies*
2. **Executive** - *execute, enforce, and administer laws and public policy*
3. **Judicial** - *interpret laws, determine their meaning, and settle societal disputes.*

In America, we know these powers as our 3 branches of government!

Government is the oldest form of human invention!

It first appeared when humans realized that they could not survive without some way to regulate their own actions, as well as those of their neighbors.

FOUR



...characteristics of “the state” (*read: nation or country*).

The State...

Can be defined as a body of people living in a defined territory, organized politically, and with the power to make and enforce law without the consent of any higher authority.

1. **Population**
2. **Territory**
3. **Sovereignty**
4. **Government**

FOUR CHARACTERISTICS OF A STATE

WHAT MAKES A STATE?



POPULATION

Large or small, every state must be inhabited—that is, have a population.



TERRITORY

Every state must have land, with known and recognized borders.



SOVEREIGNTY

The state has absolute power within its territory. It can decide its own foreign and domestic policies.



GOVERNMENT

Government is the mechanism through which a state makes and enforces its policies.

Government is necessary to avoid *“the war of every man against every man.”*

Without government, there would *“continual fear and danger of violent death and the life of man [would be] solitary, poor, nasty, brutish, and short.”*



-Thomas Hobbes

FOUR



...theories of the origin of “the state” (*read: nation or country*).

How did these “states” come to be?

*Four philosophies with no
conclusive evidence to
support any of them!*

*Which do you think the
most believable?!*

1. **Force Theory**
2. **Divine Right of Kings
Theory**
3. **Evolutionary Theory**
4. **Social Contract Theory**

HISTORICAL THEORIES OF THE ORIGINS OF THE STATE

FORCE THEORY

An individual or group claimed control over a **territory** and forced the population to submit. In this way, the state became sovereign, and those in control formed a government.



DIVINE RIGHT OF KINGS THEORY

God created the state, making it sovereign. The government is made up of those chosen by God to rule a certain territory. The population must obey their ruler.



EVOLUTIONARY THEORY

A population formed out of primitive families. The heads of these families became the government. When these families settled in one territory and claimed it as their own, they became a sovereign state.



SOCIAL CONTRACT THEORY

A population in a given territory gave up as much power to a government as needed to promote the well-being of all. In doing so, they created a sovereign state.



What does government do?

We can find a meaningful answer in the preamble to our nation's Constitution.

This does not define the purpose of government in all nations...!

“We the People of the United States, in Order to form a more perfect Union, establish Justice, insure domestic Tranquility, provide for the common defence, 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.”

Form a more perfect union



Linking the American people and States more closely together, the Constitution was built in the belief that in union there is strength.

Establish justice

The law, in both its content and its administration, must be reasonable, fair, and impartial.

“...the most sacred of the duties of government.” – Thomas Jefferson

“Injustice anywhere, is a threat to justice everywhere.” – MLK Jr.

Insure domestic tranquility

Order is essential to the well-being of any society, and keeping the peace at home has always been a primary function of government.

“If men were angels, no government would be necessary.” - James Madison, The Federalist No. 51

Provide for the common defense

Defending the nation against foreign enemies requires our nation to have a strong nation defense system (military) and foreign policies.

Promote the general welfare

Our government works as a servant of the citizens in many ways. The public policies that were listed on [Slide 4](#) are the best examples of how the American government guards our welfare.

Secure the blessings of liberty

This nation was founded by those who **loved** liberty and prized it above all earthly possessions! The American dedication to freedom for the individual, though, recognizes that *liberty cannot be absolute*.

Discussion Question

Write your discussion question for this section.

Types of Government

Think of this...

Does it matter what **FORM** a government takes?

Dictatorship? Democracy?
Theocracy?

No two governments have ever been **exactly** the same because they are products of what the people NEED.

All governments, however, can be classified based on one or more of their **basic features**.

THREE



...features to help describe, compare, analyze, and classify types of governments.

1. Who Can Participate

To many, this is the most meaningful. This classification tells us the number of people, and possibly the type of people, who are allowed to participate in the governing process.

This usually will take 1 of 2 basic forms:

Democracy

Dictatorship



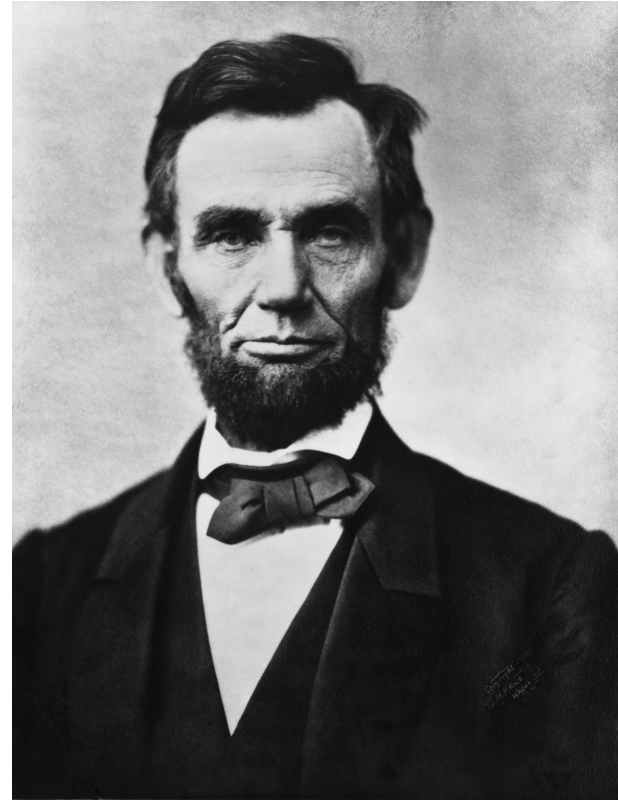
All About Democracy!

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Supreme political power rests with the people - this is also known as popular sovereignty.

“...government of the people, by the people, for the people” - **Abraham Lincoln**

Democracies can either be **direct** or **indirect**.



Direct And Indirect Democracy

WHO GOVERNS?

Direct Democracy

- Also called pure democracy
- The people themselves formulate public policy
- Works only at a small, local level

Indirect Democracy

- Also called representative democracy
- A group of persons chosen by the people formulates public policy
- Widely used at the national, State, and local levels

Based on the chart,
which type of
“democracy” does
America use?

...side note...

Republics

Some people insist that the United States is more properly called a **republic** rather than a **democracy**. They believe that in a republic the sovereign power is held by eligible voters, and political power is exercised by those whom are elected to represent the people. For them, democracy only exists in direct form.

Note that “republic” and “democracy” are not interchangeable terms.

In a democracy, the people are the only source of any and all governmental power.



Dictatorships....

- Exist where those who rule cannot be held accountable to the will of the people.
 - AKA: They do not care about the desires of the citizens.



Identified as either:

- **Autocracy** - *single person hold unlimited political power.*
- **Oligarchy** - *the power to rule is held by a small, self-appointed elite group.*

All dictatorships hold absolute power and authority over the people.

Modern dictatorships tend to be totalitarian as well - complete power over every aspect of human affairs.



Some Fun Facts About Dictatorships

...wait...are you tricking us?! These can't be fun!

1. Autocracies are rare today.
 - a. North Korea
 2. Outward appearances are deceiving.
 - a. Many times the military , religious leaders, or others may have the political power.
 - b. Often, it LOOKS like people have control.
 3. Typically are militaristic.
 - a. Use force to come to power.
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2. Geographic Distribution of Power

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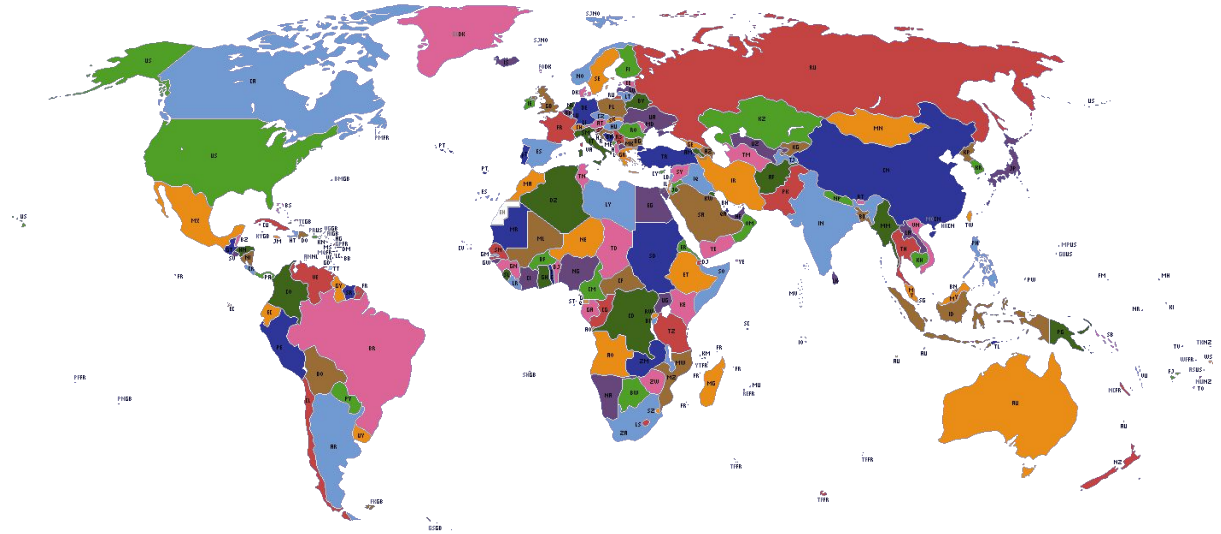
In every system of government, the power to govern is located in one more places geographically.

From this standpoint, three basic forms exist:

Unitary

Federal

Confederate



Unitary

AKA: Central

All powers held by the government belong to a single, central agency.

The central **(national)** government creates local units of government, who only have the powers the national government given them, at its own convenience.

Unitary governments are the most common type.

The image features a large, stylized Union Jack flag. The flag is composed of a red field with a white saltire (St. Andrew's Cross) in the center. The four quadrants of the flag are filled with the Union Jack pattern, which consists of a blue field with a white saltire and a red diagonal stripe. The text "Great Britain" is written in a white, cursive font across the center of the white saltire.

Great Britain

Federal

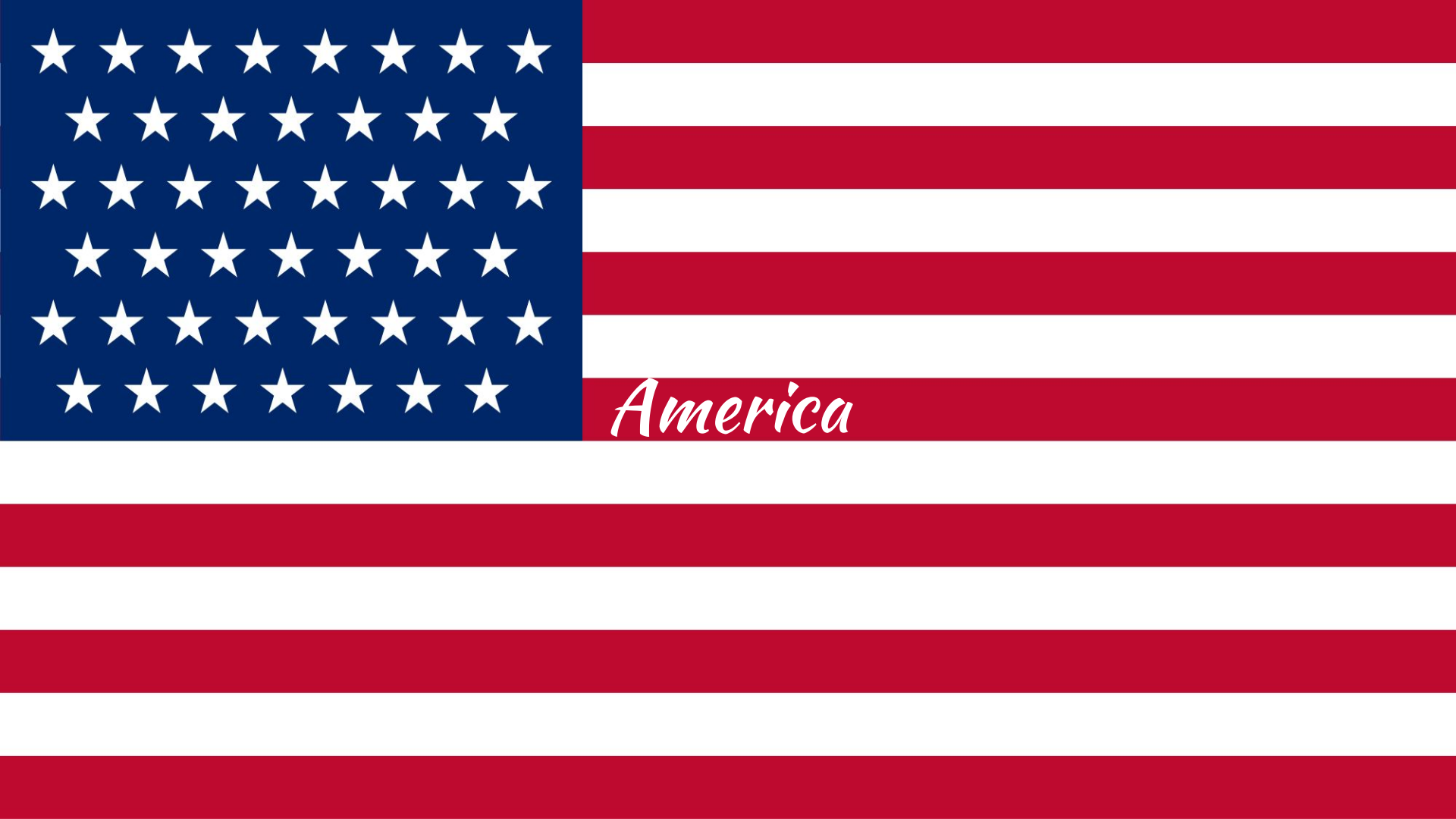
AKA: Central AND Local

The powers of the government are divided between a central government and several local governments.

An authority superior to both central and local governments establishes this division of powers.

Hint: The Constitution!

Each level has their own set of laws, officials, and agencies.



America

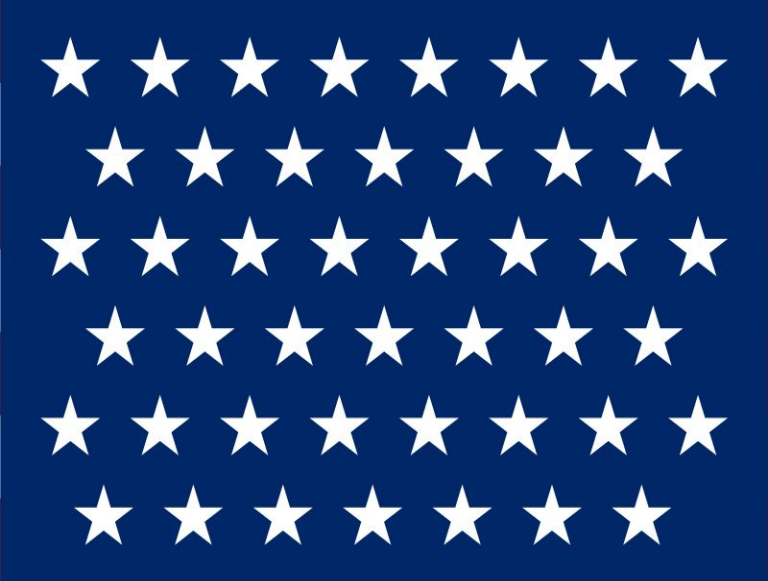
Confederate

AKA: Alliance of
Independent States

An alliance of independent states that has the power to handle only the matters that the member states have assigned to it. Typically, they have very *limited powers* and only in things such as defense and foreign affairs.

Confederations do not usually have the power to make laws directing people's lives without some other action by the member states.

Confederations make it possible for several states to cooperate on matters of mutual concern.



America
Articles of Confederation
1781-1789



The European Union

*28 Members
Free Trade
Common Currency*

3. Legislative and Executive Branches

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What is the relationship between these two branches? This classification yields two types of government:

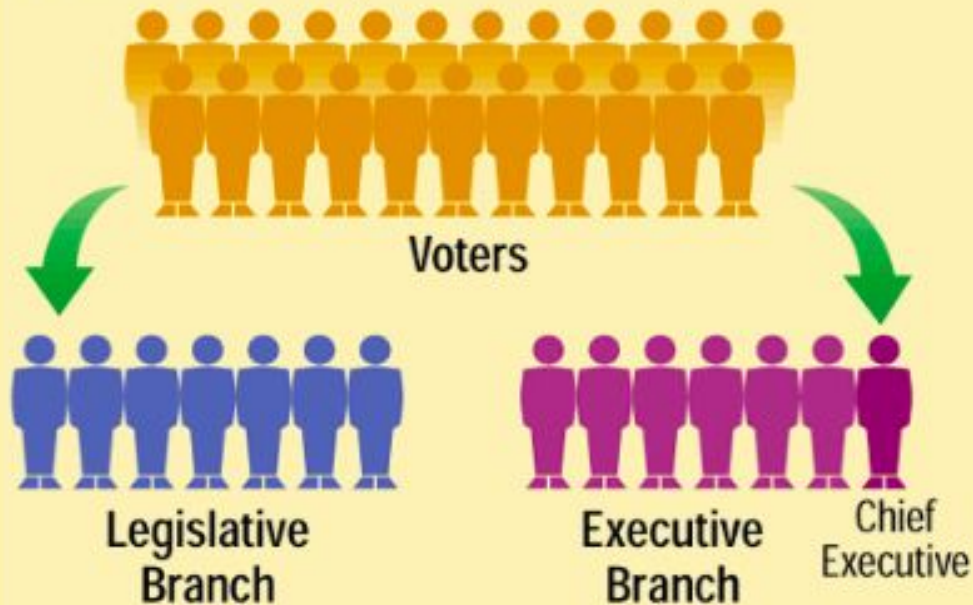
Presidential

Parliamentary

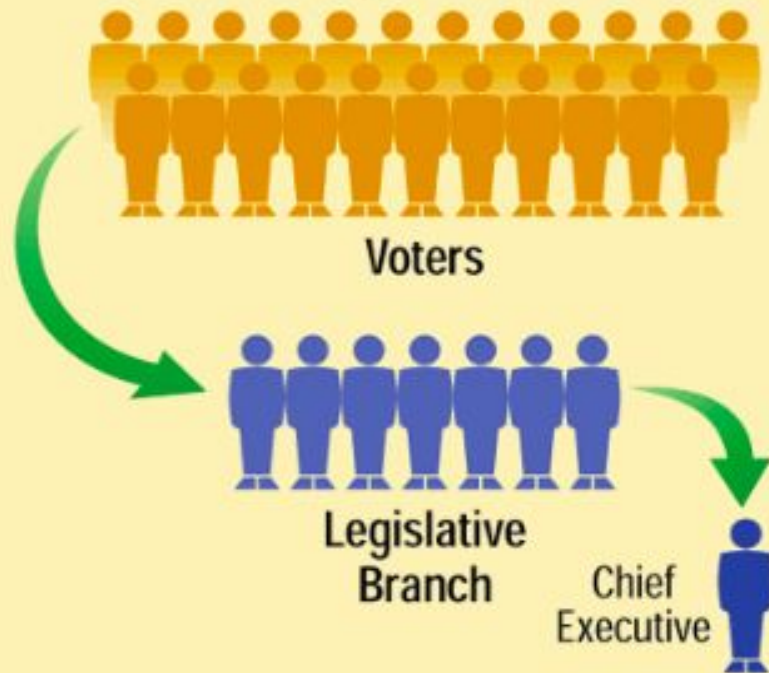


Presidential and Parliamentary Governments

The Presidential Relationship Voters elect the Legislature and the Chief Executive who is part of the Executive Branch. The legislature and executive are independent and coequal.



The Parliamentary Relationship Voters elect the Legislature. The Chief Executive is drawn from the Legislature.



Discussion Question

Write your discussion question for this section.

The Basics of Democracy

Think of this...

Democracy is not inevitable.

It doesn't exist because Americans have decided its the best. It exists because Americans believe in its basic concepts. It will only continue to exist as long as we, the people, continue to subscribe to and practice those concepts.

FIVE



...basic concepts of democracy.

Worth of the Individual



- Each individual, no matter his or her station in life, is a separate and distinct being
- Of utmost importance in a democracy
 - Democratic societies require a variety of citizens to combine their unique qualities to work together in order to meet the needs of the many
- Sometimes, however, the interests of the many, override the interests of the few

Equality of All Persons

- “All men are created equal”
 - *Thomas Jefferson*
- **DOES NOT MEAN**
 - All people are born with the same mental or physical abilities
 - All people have a right to an equal share of worldly goods
 - All MALES
- **DOES MEAN**
 - All people are entitled to equality of opportunity
 - Develop themselves as fully, or not, as they wish
 - All people are entitled to equality before the law
 - No person should be held back for any arbitrary reason
- The law does not see
 - Race
 - Color
 - Religion
 - Gender
- We have come a long way toward the goal of equality for all in this country but it is clear that the journey is far from over



Majority Rule, Minority Rights



- In a democracy, the will of the people determines public policy
 - Not the will of the ruler(s) or the few
- The majority of the people in a society will be “right” more often than they will be wrong AND more often than any one person or small group
- Democracy does recognize that the majority’s will and policy will not always be the best for everyone
- Majority rule makes democracy HAPPEN
 - It must be a checked “power” though!
 - Why?
- Minority right exists to remind the majority to listen to and understand the needs of the minority
- The minority has the freedom to object to the majority’s decisions and make suggestions to the majority

Necessity of Compromise



Compromise - *process of blending and adjusting competing views*

- Public decision making must be a matter of give-and-take among the many competing interests in a democracy
 - Finding the position most acceptable to the largest number of citizens
- Essential part of the democratic concept because:
 - Democracy puts individuals first and sets everyone equal to one another
 - This means there are many opinions and interests to be heard and considered
- Few public questions have only two sides or answers
 - How should a city pay for a new street?
 - Property owners on the street be taxed?
 - General treasury?
 - City and property owners?
 - Toll?

Individual Freedom

- Democracy requires individuals to have FREEDOM
 - But NOT complete freedom
 - What is this called?
- Democracy insists that each individual must be as free to do as he or she wishes, as far as the freedom of all will allow
 - “The right to swing my fist ends where the other man’s nose begins”
 - *Justice Oliver Wendell Holmes*
 - **What does this mean?**
- Drawing the line between the rights of one individual and those of another is not an easy, but a continuous, process in a democracy
 - Finding the **balance** is vitally important to a democratic nation
 - “The rights of every man are diminished when the rights of one are threatened.”
 - *President John F. Kennedy*



Democracy and the Free Enterprise System

The Free Enterprise System

AKA: Capitalism

The American *commitment to freedom* for the individual is deep-rooted, and it is as evident in the nation's economic system as it is in the political system.

The free enterprise system is an economic system characterized by the private ownership of goods; investments made by private decision, not government directive; and success or failure determined by competition in the marketplace.

This system is based upon four fundamental factors.

— — —

FOUR



...fundamental factors of the free enterprise system...



CAPITALISM

**PRIVATE
OWNERSHIP**

**INDIVIDUAL
INITIATIVE**

PROFIT

COMPETITION

U.S. FREE ENTERPRISE SYSTEM

How it Works

- Does not rely on the government to decide what items are to be produced, how much of any particular item should be produced, or how much any item should sell for.
- Those decisions are made in the marketplace.
- Producers and consumers abide by the unwritten law of supply and demand.

When supplies of goods and services become plentiful, prices will drop.

When supplies of goods and services become scarce, prices will rise.

Remember...

Democracy and the *free enterprise system* are **NOT** the same thing.

One is a **political system**, and the other is an **economic system**.

Both are rooted in the concept of individual freedom.

So, what does this have to do with the government?!

— — —

The government's role in the economy is to protect the public and preserve private enterprise.

The government's participation in the economy can be seen at every level in this country: local, State, and national.

Examples of Government intervention in the economy are:

1. Antitrust laws
2. Pure food and drug laws
3. Anti Pollution standards
4. City and county zoning ordinances and building codes

The government promotes its economic activity by providing a great deal of services to the public such as:

1. Grants money for transportation and the growing of specific crops
2. Builds roads
3. Operates public schools
4. Provides post offices

How much should the
government participate,
regulate, police, and
serve?

That is up to YOU!

Discussion Question

Write your discussion question for this section.