

# Chapter 2: Origins of American Government

Section 4

Lecture Notes

# AMERICAN GOVERNMENT

PEARSON

# ► Objectives

1. Identify the Framers of the Constitution and discuss how they organized the Philadelphia Convention.
2. Compare and contrast the Virginia Plan and the New Jersey Plan.
3. Summarize the convention's major compromises and the effects of those decisions.
4. Describe the delegates' reactions to the Constitution.

# ▶ Key Terms

- **Framers:** the individuals who attended the Philadelphia Convention
- **Virginia Plan:** a plan offered at the Convention that called for a central government with three branches, with each state's representation in a bicameral legislature based mainly on population
- **New Jersey Plan:** a plan calling for a central government with a unicameral legislature and equal representation of all the states.

## ▶ Key Terms, cont.

- **Connecticut Compromise:** an agreement to divide Congress into two houses, one with representation based on state population and one with equal representation for all states
- **Three-Fifths Compromise:** an agreement to count each slave as three fifths of a person when determining state population
- **Commerce and Slave Trade Compromise:** an agreement forbidding Congress from taxing state exports or interfering with the slave trade for at least 20 years

# ► Introduction

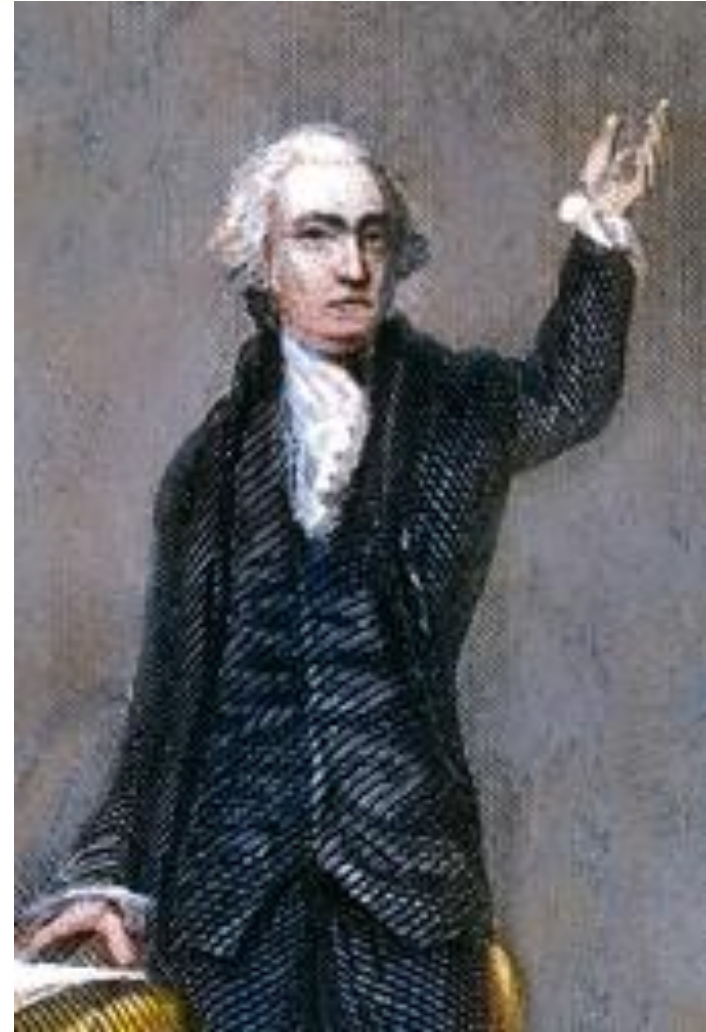
- What compromises enabled the Framers to create the Constitution?
  - The Connecticut Compromise
    - This compromise dealt with how to determine the representation of states in the national legislature.
  - The Three-Fifths Compromise
    - This compromise dealt with issues arising from slavery.
  - The Commerce and Slave Trade Compromise
    - This compromise addressed northern and southern disagreements about foreign trade.

# ▶ The Framers

- The Constitutional Convention began on May 25, 1787, with 55 delegates.
  - These individuals, called the Framers, came from many backgrounds:
    - Many had fought in the **Revolutionary War**.
    - Eight had signed the **Declaration of Independence**.
    - 34 had **attended college** at a time when it was a rare achievement.
    - Two would become **President**, one a **Vice President**, nineteen a **U.S. Senator**, and thirteen a member of the **House of Representatives**.

# ▶ A New Government

- The Framers elected George Washington as president of the convention and set up procedural rules.
  - A majority of state delegations would need to be present to conduct business.
  - Each delegation would have one vote.
  - A majority vote would carry a proposal.



## ▶ A New Government, cont.

- Then, on May 30th, the Framers made their biggest decision: to replace the Articles of Confederation rather than amend them.
  - James Madison (right) was a major figure in the movement to replace the Constitution.





# ▶ The Virginia Plan

- This plan called for a government with a legislative, executive, and judicial branch.
  - Congress would have two houses, with representation based on state population or the money given to the central government.
  - Congress would have more power than it had under the Articles.
    - It would be able to force states to obey federal law.
  - The members of Congress would elect a national executive and judiciary.
    - These two branches would form a council that could veto acts passed by Congress.

# ▶ The New Jersey Plan

- This plan proposed a much different organization of the three branches.
  - Congress would have a single house with equal representation for each state.
    - This Congress would have more limited powers than under the Virginia Plan.
  - There would be an executive committee of several people, chosen by Congress.
    - At the request of a majority of state governors, Congress could remove members of this committee.
  - The executive committee would appoint a supreme tribunal to be the federal judiciary.

# ▶ Connecticut Compromise

- Checkpoint: What was the Connecticut Compromise?
  - Small states feared that larger states would dominate them under the Virginia Plan.
  - The Connecticut Compromise, also called the Great Compromise, solved this dispute.
    - In the House of Representatives, each state would be represented according to its population.
    - In the Senate, each state would have equal representation.

## ▶ Additional Compromises

- Southern states wanted to count slaves as part of the state population. Northern states did not.
  - The Three-Fifths Compromise counted each slave as three-fifths of a person when figuring representation in Congress.

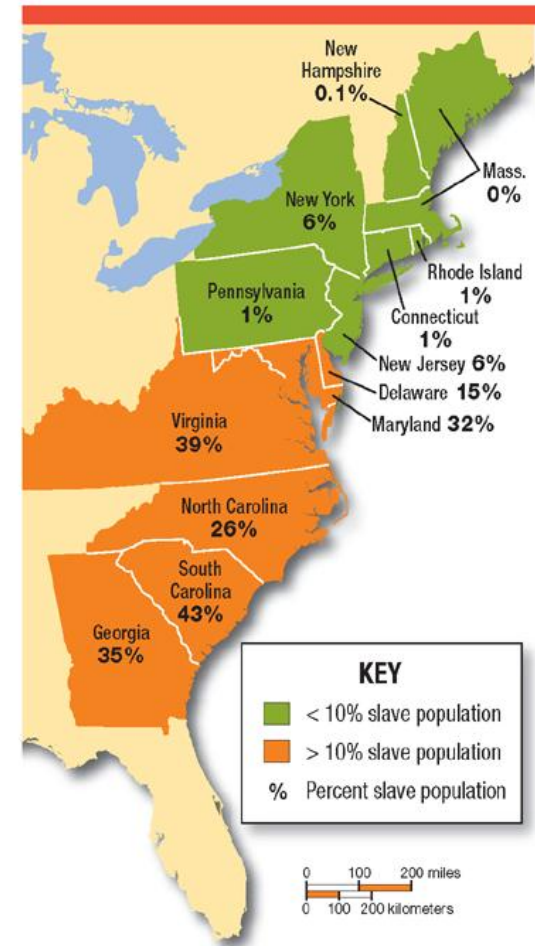
## ▶ Additional Compromises, cont.

- Southern states wanted to protect their agricultural exports and the slave trade from regulation by Congress.
  - Under the Commerce and Slave Trade Compromise, Congress could not tax state exports or interfere with the slave trade until 1808.

# ► The Issue of Slavery

- Disputes over slavery during the Convention arose because slavery was far more common in the agricultural South than in the more industrial North.
- However, slavery was legal in every states except Massachusetts.

Slavery in the United States, 1790



# ▶ A Bundle of Compromises

- Checkpoint: Why was the Constitution called a “bundle of compromises”?
  - The Framers had to resolve disputes involving such issues as:
    - The exact structure of the new government
    - Regional differences among the states
    - The method of choosing the President
    - How to amend the Constitution
    - The limits on federal powers
  - The Constitution they approved on September 17, 1787, has thus been called a “bundle of compromises.”

## ► Review

- Now that you have learned what compromises enabled the Framers to create the Constitution, go back and answer the Chapter Essential Question.
  - How does the Constitution reflect the times in which it was written?