

4.1

The Articles of Confederation



As a Young Historian, I will be able to...

- **Explain how the states' new constitutions reflected republican ideals.**
- **Describe the structure and powers of the national government under the Articles of Confederation.**
- **Summarize the Congress's plan for the settlement and governance of western lands.**
- **Understand why tensions with foreign countries revealed the weakness of the U.S. government.**
- **List the main weaknesses of the Articles.**

Time for a New Nation!

All the states called for **republics**, governments in which the people elect their representatives

Some favored a **unicameral legislature**, a single legislative house whose members were elected by people

Others wanted a **bicameral legislature**, a lawmaking body with 2 houses such as a Senate & House of Representatives.

States argued who could vote, free men or those who owned property

A New Union

States also wanted **religious liberty**, the freedom to choose their own religion free from government support

In 1777, The Continental Congress signed **The Articles of Confederation**, “league of friendship”.

Key Point! Wanted a **federal**, national, government to oversee the states via delegates

Key Point! Congress had power to make & enforce law!

Key Point! Congress could declare war, work with American Indians.

The Northwest Territory

This was land of the Ohio River & west of Pennsylvania that farmers wanted to own.

The Land Ordinance of 1785- Congress distributes the land & issues taxes.

The Northwest Ordinance of 1787- Provided Government for the region & laid out how states were made.

Also barred slavery from the region & new states in region had to enter the Union.

Issues with the New States

100,000 American Indians faced relocation & would fight to keep settlers out of the region.

Spain discouraged settlement & banned trade with America at New Orleans.

Britain resumed Mercantilism & the Navigation acts & would only trade via their interests.

Britain also kept forts on the frontier & cited violations of the peace treaty.

Weakness of the Articles

Congress could not create a common currency or levy taxes. They could only borrow money!

Each State only had 1 vote in Congress, & 2/3rds majority to pass a law.

Each State had to agree to amend the Articles & there was no executive branch.

Shay's Rebellion- Farmers take up arms to block foreclosure hearings & lose of property

The States had to join together once more to create a new national government.