



# The Constitutional Convention of 1787

**Government officials realized after Shays' Rebellion that a change was needed.**

## **The Second Constitutional Convention**

**A convention of representatives from each state were called to Philadelphia in 1787. 74 Men were invited to come to Philadelphia but only 55 delegates arrived.**

**Twelve states sent delegates, all but Rhode Island.**

**Delegates had a choice to make:**

- 1. Fix the Articles of Confederation**
- 2. Write a new plan for government**



**The delegates decided to write a new plan for government. The challenge was to create a strong national government but one that would still leave state governments some power.**

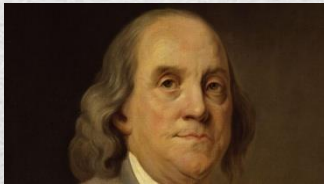


# The Constitutional Convention Delegates



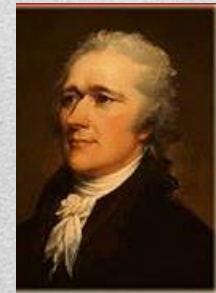
**James Madison** read as many books as he could find to prepare for the convention. He is known as the “Father of the Constitution” because of the detailed notes he took of the proceedings.

**George Washington** came out of retirement for the convention. Due to his leadership during the American Revolution he was chosen to be president of the convention.

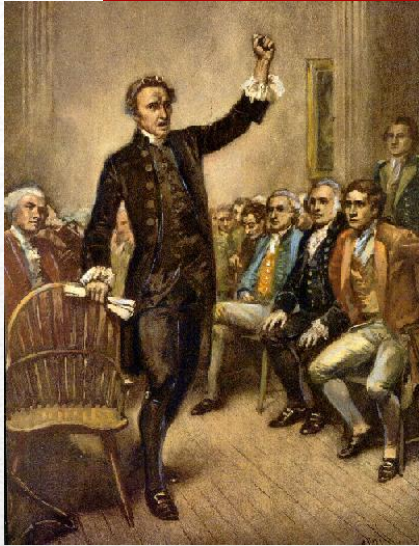


**Benjamin Franklin** was the oldest delegate at age 81. He added his experience and sense of humor to the discussions and often helped keep arguments from getting out of control.

**Alexander Hamilton** a staunch supporter of a strong national government. He was Washington’s personal secretary during the American Revolution.







**It was decided that the meetings during the Constitutional Convention would be kept secret so delegates could feel free to speak their minds without fear of outside interference.**

**Guards were posted at the doors and all the windows were closed. The men swore not to speak of the meetings with anyone but the other delegates.**

**Not everyone agreed with the secrecy. Some believed the discussions should be open to the public. But others believed that if word got out they were doing more than just fixing the Articles, they would never be allowed to create a stronger government.**



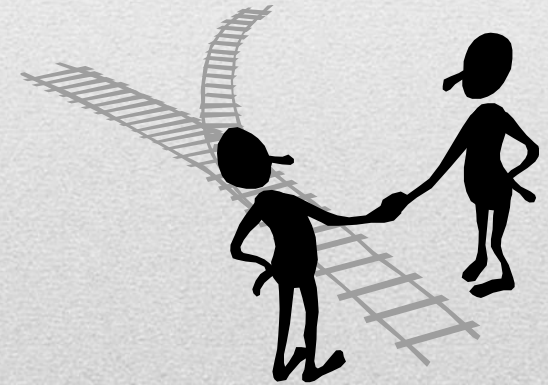


**COMPROMISE** – to settle differences by each side making concessions (giving in a little) to come to a solution that solves the problem.

It took a lot of give and take to come to agreement on the new Constitution. The three biggest compromises had to do with representation and slavery.

# The Three Main Compromises

- The Great Compromise
  - The 3/5 Compromise
  - The Slave Trade Compromise
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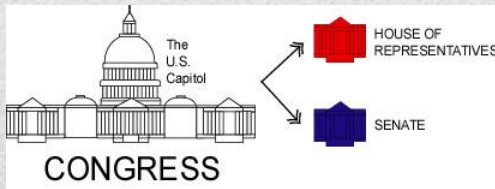
# The Great Compromise

a. A major debate at the convention was over how to set up Congress - the legislative branch of the government. It became a battle between the smaller states and the larger states.

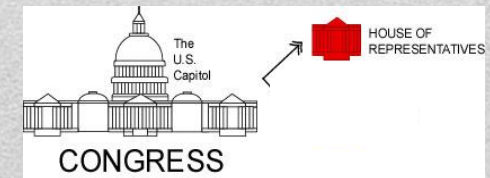


b. Several states submitted plans for the type of legislature they wanted.

i. The Virginia Plan (introduced by Edmund Randolph and James Madison) wanted the legislative branch to have two houses. Both houses would assign representatives based on wealth and population.



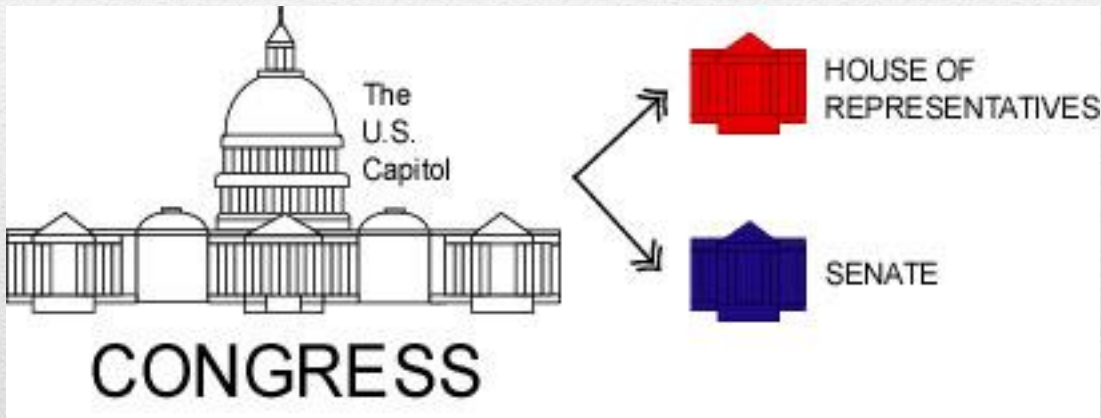
ii. The New Jersey plan (introduced by William Paterson) wanted the legislative branch to have one house. Each state would have only one vote.





# The Great Compromise

- c. The Great Compromise (proposed by Roger Sherman) took a little from both plans and agreed on setting up the legislature with two houses.



The Senate would be based on **equality**. Each state no matter how small or large would have two senators.

The House of Representatives would be based on **population**. Each state would get one representative for each 650,000 people living in the state. Originally one for every 40,000.

# **The Great Compromise in summary**

- **Answered the question of Representation**
  - **Set up a Bicameral (2 house) Legislature**
  - **In The House of Representatives each state would send representatives based on their population**
  - **In the Senate each state sends two representatives**
  - **The results: the House favors states with larger populations, the Senate favors those with a smaller population**
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# 3/5 Compromise

I count!

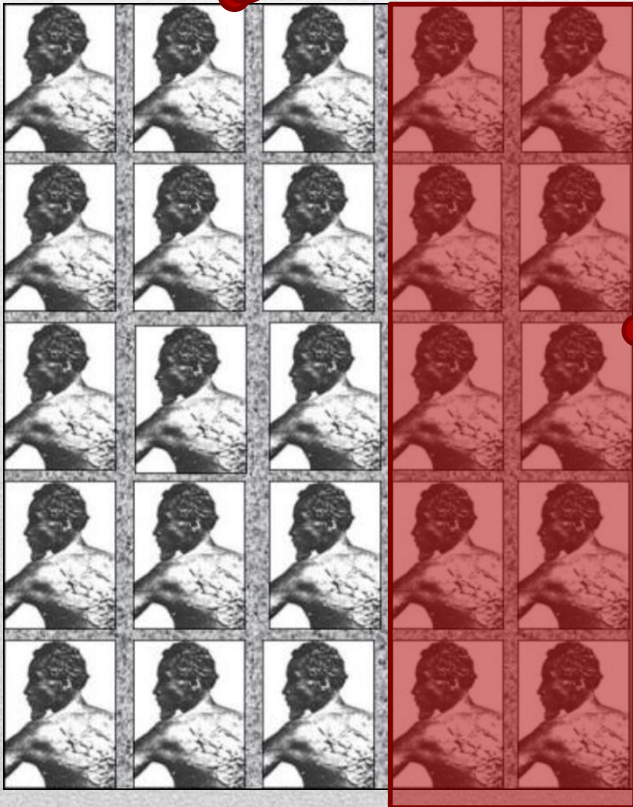
Count slaves towards representation in

North realized that this would allow the south to dominate  
(control) Congress

I don't, oh  
no!

But slaves were not free  
not be counted toward  
should count for taxes.

A compromise was reached: three out of  
every five slaves would be counted for the  
purpose of representation and taxes.



# The Slave Trade Compromise

**The North worried that the South could control Congress simply by importing more slaves**

**A limit on the importation of Slaves was agreed upon**

**Slaves could be imported only until 1808**



**Each imported slave would have a \$10.00 tax levied upon the transaction**

**In exchange for the delay in ending the import of slaves the South agreed to let the national government regulate slave trade.**

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