

14.2 The Articles of Confederation

List the problems with the Articles of Confederation:

- Weak central government → Only Congress
- No President
- No courts to settle disputes between states
- Making laws was difficult → 9/13 states needed to approve new laws
- No way to make currency (\$)
- No power to collect taxes

14.3 The Constitutional Convention

What happens at the Constitutional Convention?

- Delegates met in Philadelphia in May 1787 to improve the Articles of Confederation
- Important players: Washington, Franklin, Morris & Madison
- Agreed to have both state and national governments
- Created 3 branches of government
- Signed Constitution Sept. 17, 1787
- Finally approved by 9 of 13 states in June 1788

14.4 Legislative Branch

Main Responsibility - making laws

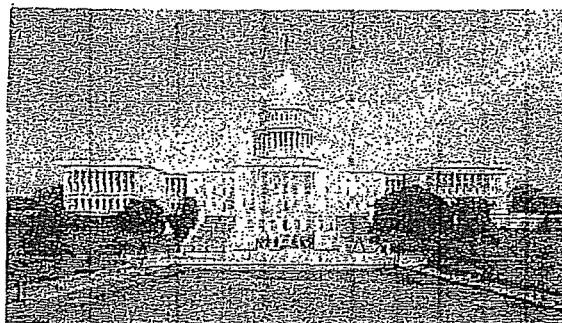
Members - Congress

① House of Representatives → determined by population = 435

② Senate → every state has 2 senators = 100

Key Powers

- Write and pass bills for President to sign
- Can override President's veto with $\frac{2}{3}$ majority
- Powers of Senate
 - 1) Approve or reject President's choice of ambassadors, federal judges, & President's cabinet
 - 2) Approve treaties with foreign countries
- Congress can declare war
- Impeach government officials
- Collect taxes
- Create currency (money)



THE LEGISLATIVE BRANCH

The Senate (See Article I, Section 3)

① The other house that makes up the Congress is the Senate. The Senate is the smaller of the two groups, with only 100 members. These people are known as senators. Each state, regardless of how big or small, has two senators. Currently there are 50 states, so we have 100 senators in Washington, D.C.

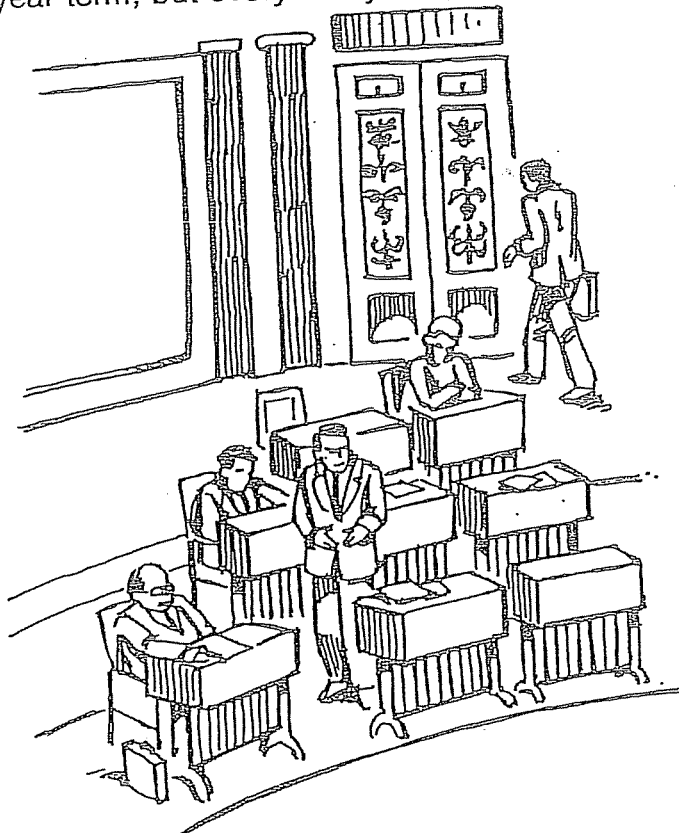
② Each senator is elected for a six-year term, but every two years, one third of the senate is up for reelection. For example, in 1992, 33 senators were elected for six-year terms. In 1994, 33 others will be elected, and in 1996, 34 will be elected. This way, there is never an entirely new group of senators; there will always be some experienced senators to guide the newcomers.

③ According to the original Constitution, the senators were chosen by their state legislatures, but in 1913, the Seventeenth Amendment changed this and allowed the people to elect their senators directly.

④ In order to be a senator there are certain requirements that must be met. A senator must be at least 30 years old, a citizen of the United States for at least nine years, and live in the state he or she represents.

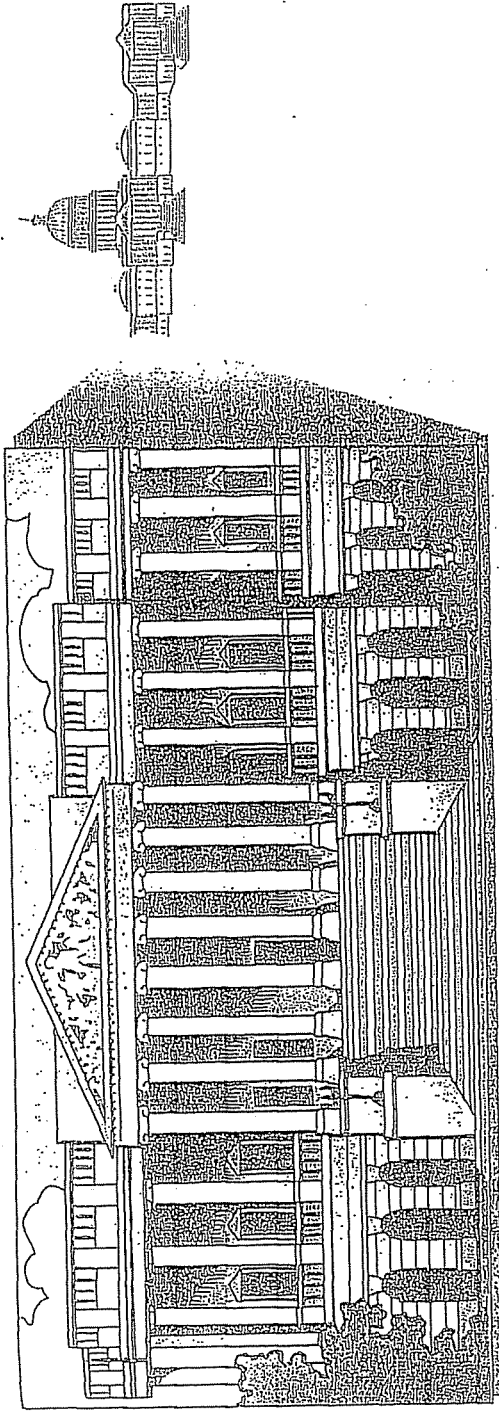
⑤ The Senate also has certain leaders. The Vice President of the United States is in charge of all meetings of the Senate. He can only vote in the event of a tie between the senators. If the Vice President is absent, the senators choose an alternate presiding officer known as the president pro tempore (temporary president). The president pro tempore is third in line to take over the presidency in the event of an emergency.

⑥ With regards to the impeachment process mentioned in the last lesson, the Senate acts as the jury and tries any impeachment cases. When the House of Representatives accuses an official of a crime, the Senate decides whether or not the official is guilty. The Chief Justice of the Supreme Court acts as the judge. Two thirds of the senators present must find the official guilty in order to remove him or her from office.



Senators at their desks in the U.S. Senate chamber.

The House of Representatives



One of the two lawmaking bodies established as a result of the Great Compromise was the House of Representatives. This pleased states with large populations, since they would have more representatives than the small states. Representatives would be elected to serve for a period of 2 years.

The House is larger than the Senate. The Constitution gave Congress the power to determine the size of the House and to divide representation according to state population. The Constitution also provided for at least one representative for each state. Originally, there was one representative for every 30,000 people. Today, there is one representative per several hundred thousand people. Six states have just one representative each. They are Alaska, Delaware, North Dakota, South Dakota, Vermont and Wyoming. California has the most representatives, with 45. Every 10 years, the Constitution requires a census to be taken, so that if state populations change, their number of representatives can, too. At the first session of the House of Representatives, there were 59 members. Today there are 435.

14.5 Executive Branch

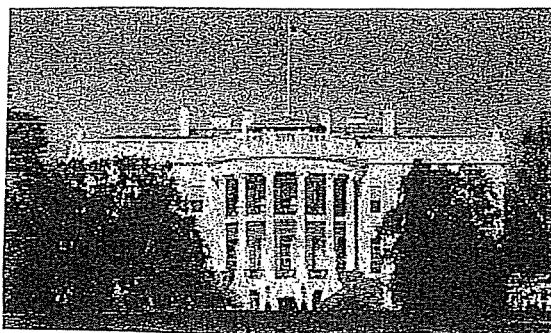
Main Responsibility - Carry Out (enforce) the laws

Members

President, Vice President , Cabinet
and other staff

Key Powers

- Sign or veto bills passed by Congress
- gives Congress ideas for laws in his State of the Union address
- nominates ambassadors, cabinet members and federal judges
- Call Congress together for special meetings
- Sign treaties with foreign countries
- grant pardons



THE EXECUTIVE BRANCH

Qualifications for President

(See Article II, Section 1)

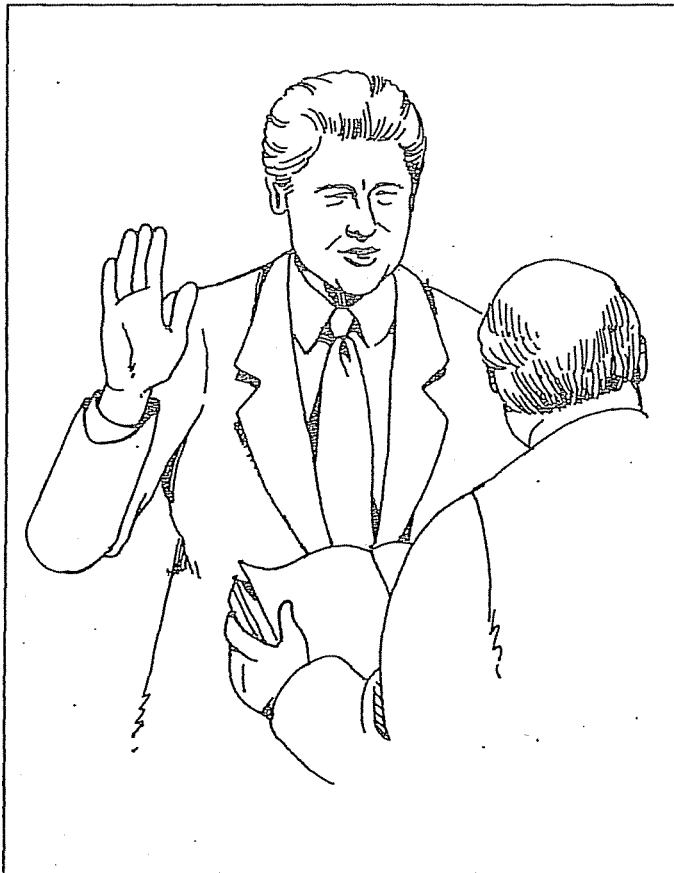
① Just as there were requirements to be a representative or a senator, the Constitution set forth certain requirements to be the President of the United States.

② In order to be President, a person must be a natural-born citizen of the United States—not an immigrant. He or she must be at least 35 years old and have been a resident of the United States for at least 14 years.

③ In the event that the President dies or is unfit to continue as President, there is a detailed line of succession. The Vice President assumes the power of the Presidency first; if he is unable, then the Speaker of the House of Representatives takes over. After him is the president pro tempore of the Senate, then the various Cabinet department heads in order of the establishment of the departments, beginning with the Secretary of State. The 25th Amendment outlines what is done when the President dies or is disabled.

④ The salary of the President is set by the Congress and does not change during the President's term of office. Currently the salary is \$200,000.

⑤ The President and Vice President are elected on the first Tuesday after the first Monday in November. They are sworn in on Inauguration Day, January 20. Usually, the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court is the person who administers the oath of office to the President at the ceremony. The oath of office is as follows:



"I do solemnly swear (or affirm) that I will faithfully execute the office of President of the United States, and will to the best of my ability, preserve, protect, and defend the Constitution of the United States." "So help me God" is added by the Presidents.

President Bill Clinton taking the oath of office.

14.6 Judicial Branch

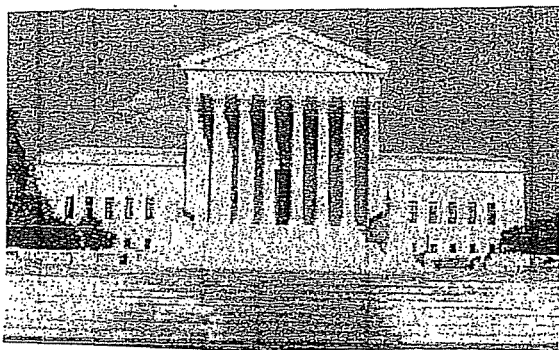
Main Responsibility - Interpret laws → Decide what the law means

Members

- Supreme Court - 9 Justices
- Other Federal Courts

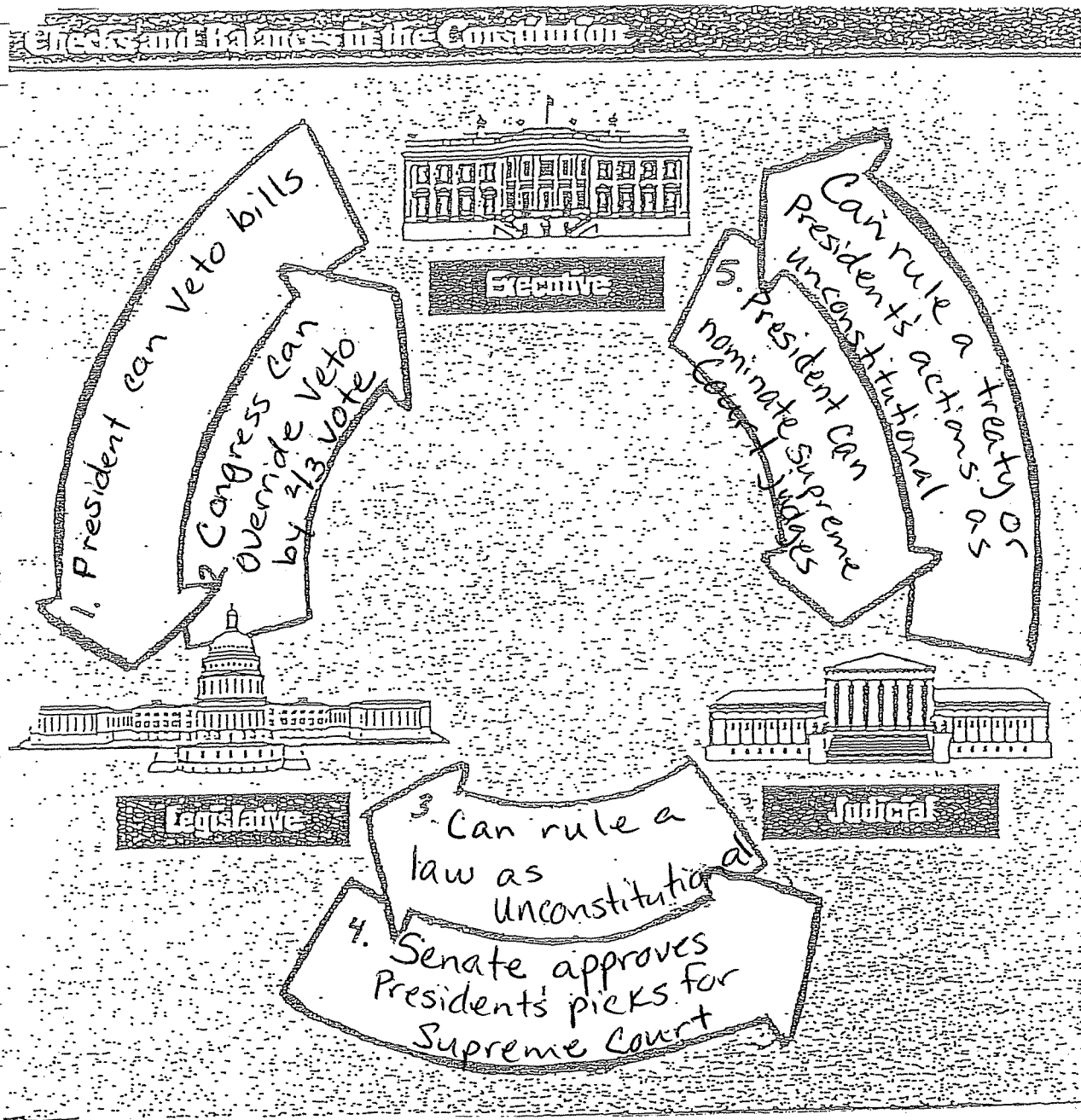
Key Powers

- Determine if a law is unconstitutional
- Settle disagreements between states
- Determine if treaties with foreign countries are unconstitutional
- Settle disagreements about what a law means
- Chief Justice presides over impeachment trials



14.7 – Limiting Power: Checks and Balances

What powers do each of the branches have that balance or limit the powers of the other branches?



Requirements to Be...

US Representative:

435 Reps

- Term Length: 2 years
- Age Requirement: 25 years old
- Live in US for at least 7 years
- Live in state that he/she represents
- Leader: Speaker of the House

US SENATOR:

100 Senators

- Term Length: 6 years
- Age Requirement: 30 years
- Live in US for at least 9 years
- Live in state he/she represents
- Leader: Vice President

PRESIDENT of the US:

- Term Length: 4 years
- Age Requirement: 35 years old
- Live in US for at least 14 years
- **Must be a natural born citizen of US