

Would you have been a Federalist or an Anti-Federalist?

CH 6 Docs

Document A

Source: "Declaration and Resolves of the First Continental Congress, 10/14/1774.

"...the foundation of English liberty, and of all free governments, is a right in the people to participate in their legislative council: and as the English colonists are not represented, and from their local and other circumstances cannot properly be represented in the British parliament, they are entitled to a free and exclusive power of legislation in their several provincial legislatures, where their right of legislation can alone be preserved, in all cases of taxation and internal polity..." [W.C. Ford, ed. *Journals of the Continental Congress*, 1904, I, 63.

Document B

Source: Thomas Paine, *Common Sense*, 1776.

"...the powers of governing still remaining in the hands of the king, he will have a negative over the whole legislation of this continent. And he has shown himself such an inveterate enemy to liberty, and discovered such a thirst for arbitrary power, is he, or is he not, a proper person to say no to these colonies, 'You shall make no laws but what I please!'" [Paine, *Common Sense*, 1856]

Document C

Source: *Declaration of Independence*, 1776

We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness. — That to secure these rights, Governments are instituted among Men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed, — That whenever any Form of Government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the Right of the People to alter or to abolish it, and to institute new Government, laying its foundation on such principles and organizing its powers in such form, as to them shall seem most likely to effect their Safety and Happiness.

...

The history of the present King of Great Britain is a history of repeated injuries and usurpations, all having in direct object the establishment of an absolute Tyranny over these States. To prove this, let Facts be submitted to a candid world.

Document D

Melancton Smith, June 21, 1788

[Representatives] should be a true picture of the people, possess a knowledge of their circumstances and their wants, sympathize in all their distresses, and be disposed to seek their true interests....[T]he number of representatives should be so large, as that, while it embraces the men of the first class, it should admit those of the middling class of life. I am convinced that this government is so constituted that the representatives will generally be composed of the first class in the community, which I shall distinguish by the name of the natural aristocracy of the country.

In every society, men of this [aristocratic] class will command a superior degree of respect; and if the government is so constituted as to admit but few to exercise the powers of it, it will, according to the natural course of things, be in their hands. Men in the middling class, who are qualified as representatives, will not be so anxious to be chosen as those of the first. When the number is so small, the office will be highly elevated and distinguished; the style in which the members live will probably be high; circumstances of this kind will render the place of a representative not a desirable one to sensible, substantial men, who have been used to walk in the plain and frugal paths of life....

A substantial yeoman, of sense and discernment, will hardly ever be chosen. From these remarks, it appears that the government will fall into the hands of the few and the great. This will be a government of oppression....The great consider themselves above the common people, entitled to more respect, do not associate with them; they fancy themselves to have a right of preeminence in every thing.

Document E

Source: Alexander Hamilton, Speech to the Constitutional Convention, 1787

“The people are turbulent and changing; they seldom judge or determine right. Give therefore to the first class [rich and well born] a distinct, permanent share in the government. They will check the unsteadiness of the second [common people]; and as they cannot receive any advance by a change, they therefore will ever maintain good government.”

- Alexander Hamilton

Document F

Source: Letter from Thomas Jefferson to William S. Smith, 11/13/1787.

“God forbid we should ever be 20 years without such a rebellion...What country can preserve its liberties, if their rulers are not warned from time to time that this people preserve the spirit of resistance? Let them take arms!...What signify a few lives lost in a century or two? The tree of liberty must be refreshed from time to time with the blood of patriots and tyrants.” [Jefferson, *Papers*, XII, 356.]

Document G

Source: Speech of Patrick Henry during the debate in the Virginia Ratifying Convention, June 1788.

“...This proposal of altering our federal government is of the most alarming nature! Make the best of this new government—say it is composed of anything but inspiration—you ought to be extremely cautious, watchful, jealous of your liberty: for, instead of securing your rights, you may lose them forever. If a wrong step be now made, the republic be lost forever. If this new government will not come up to the expectation of the people and they shall be disappointed, their liberty will be lost, and tyranny must and will arise.” [Eliot, III in *Annals of America*, III, 280-81]