

Articles of Confederation FRQ

After Britain's American colonies revolted and broke off, they became an independent set of states. Thus, in order to maintain order and balance, they had to create a new form of government which would epitomize the government that they had fought for: one with weak central rule, and power to the people (in the form of republicanism). The Articles of Confederation were the basis of that government. The new American nation faced challenges such as another potential revolution, repaying high debts incurred from the war, uniting the states, protecting their trade, and protecting themselves. The Articles of Confederation were a solid step for America, for although they did not solve America's debt, nor to an extent their trade problems, they gave America a temporary democratic central government that could gather up the states to work issues out, kept foreign forces from meddling with America's infrastructure, and prepared Americans to take the next step toward establishing a stronger government.

After the Revolution, the whole nation was desperately in need of order, and the Articles created a government up to the standards. The standards were: equality of all states, the right for people to be able to control their government, and nothing close to a monarchy such as of Britain. Thus they set up a basic democracy that kept the people happy and united, while actually having a government. Every state had one vote in the United States Congress, regardless of size. Unfortunately, that meant that the states with larger populations were under-represented. The Articles also were very strict in regards to make minimal the states' abilities to communicate, make treaties with, or trade with other countries outside of America. This move kept other more powerful countries from imposing their system of administration or ideas onto America, setting it on the path toward making the Constitution.

In the long run, the Articles of Confederation kept the U.S. out of a monarchy, set up the U.S. democratic voting system, and most importantly of all, shifted the people's trust to the central government. Once the people became more comfortable with having a weak central government, they would be more ready to have a stronger one. Meanwhile, the system of sending delegates to Congress based upon the people's vote solved the United States' issue of having a democracy, and it lasted with some additions past the reformation of America's government. The Articles of Confederation also created the United States army to protect America's possessions, both en route through the seas as well as in home territory. After all, they were no longer under Britain's protection, while strong powers such as Spain were still opposed to the United States on the western side.

Unfortunately, the Articles did not better, but instead worsened America's economic crisis. The limited trading of the States with outside countries weakened the economy and kept out income through outside sources. Meanwhile, the Articles did not establish a uniform code of

trade throughout the individual states, thus unnecessarily complicating interstate trade. Some states were forced to print semi-useless paper money, which did not aid in the least. The government also had no way of financing itself, basically rendering it useless economically. States were not even obliged to support the central government fiscally, meaning they were not obliged to help their neighboring states either. Every state had to impose its own (possibly conflicting) tariffs and tax-collecting measures. The debt piled up; the money to pay for it did not. The Articles had no way of solving this important issue (possibly for the better, for it led the people to a newer government).

Thus the Articles of Confederation solved many of the new nation's problems, and helped start solving the issues it was not able to solve. The United States benefited from the Articles due to this attribute. They carried America through its baby years and helped America learn to grow up to be the powerful country it is now.