

The Colonial Period

Ch 2 sec 1

I. English Political Heritage

- A. The English colonists brought with them a heritage of freedom and principles of government that helped shape the development of the United States.
- B. There were two main principles of government that they brought: limited government and representative government.
- C. The Magna Carta limited the power of the king in regards to the nobility. He had to get their permission to tax them or pass laws that would affect them.



I. English Political Heritage

- C. The Petition of Right in 1628 severely limited the power of the English monarchy.
- D. Parliament had to approve taxes, and the king could not imprison people without a reason.
- E. The colonists believed in the limits on the ruler's power and the freedoms protected in the English Bill of Rights passed by Parliament in 1688.



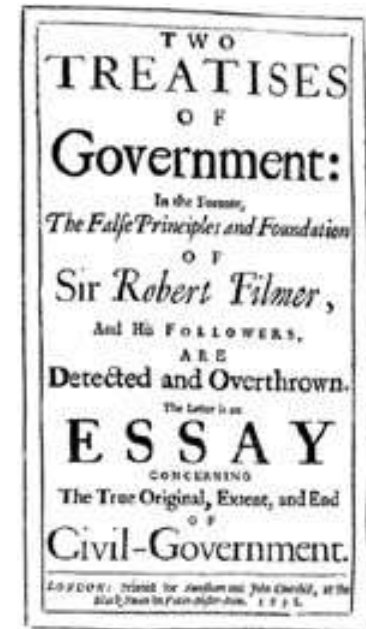
I. English Political Heritage

- The English Bill of Rights put clear limits on the power of the king. The king was in power because of the consent of the people.
- Parliament was where the true power of the people lay, so they were the ones that would approve actions the government would take.



I. English Political Heritage

- E. The colonists firmly believed in representative government, following the model of Parliament.
- F. There were two houses in Parliament; the House of Lords and the House of Commons.
- G. The ideas of the seventeenth century English philosopher John Locke deeply influenced the American colonists.



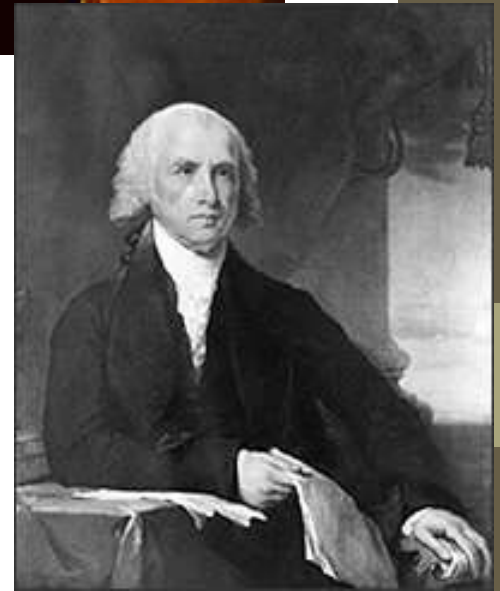
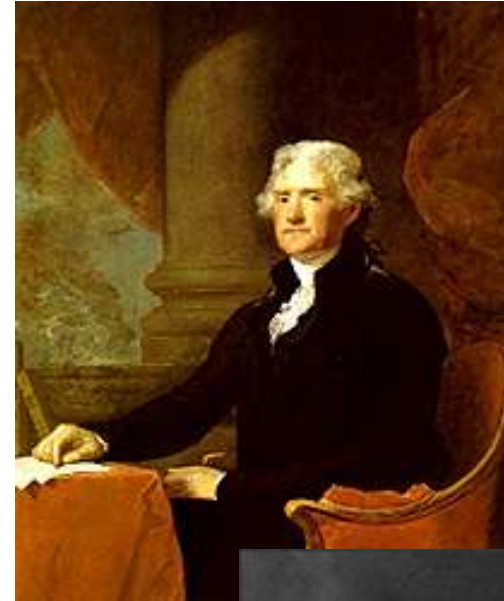
I. English Political Heritage

- Locke outlined natural rights as well as the idea that government was based on consent of the governed. If the people's rights were not protected, they had the right to get rid of the government and replace it.
- This was in direct violation of the divine-right theory that stated the monarchy was established by God, and to go against the king was to go against God.



II. Government in the Colonies

- A. While democracy was growing in the colonies, it was still very limited. You had to be a white, male, landowner in order to vote.
- B. However, the present system of American government evolved largely from colonial governments and their practices.
- C. Written plans of government were key feature of the colonial period.



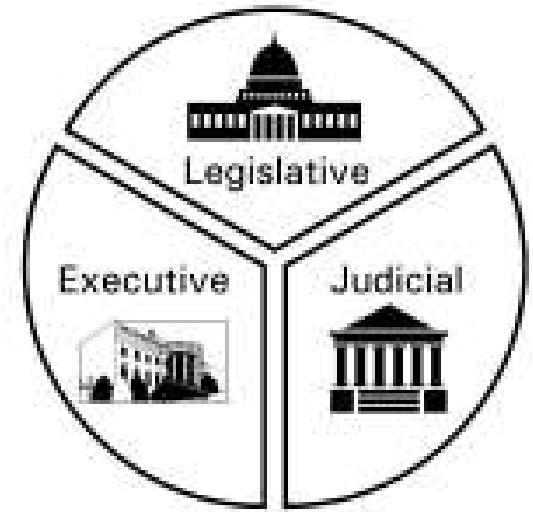
II. Government in the Colonies

- The *Mayflower Compact* and the *General Fundamentals* were the first written agreements about how society would function.
- The *Fundamental Orders of Connecticut* was the first formal constitution in America. It laid out the plan for government as well as the rights of citizens in participating in government.



II. Government in the Colonies

- C. Representative assemblies elected by the people helped establish the tradition of representative government in America.
- D. The first assembly was the Virginia House of Burgesses. In New England, town meetings were the first governing bodies, followed by the colonial legislatures.
- E. The division of government powers among the governor, the colonial legislatures, and colonial courts helped establish the principle of the separation of powers.



In your notebooks

- Using the information you have received today, create a half-page summary of what section one was all about.