

# Foundation of American Government

Ch.1 – SSCG 1

SSCG 19

- What is government? Which form of government is best? Why did government originate? What are the functions of government?

- The Greek philosopher Aristotle was one of the first to study government.
- He studied the *polis*, a state consisting of a city and the surrounding countryside, of the ancient Greeks.
- The Greeks gave us many terms and concepts of government such as *politics*, *democracy*, and *republic*.



- The word *state* comes from the Latin word *stare* and means “to stand.”
- A *state* is a political community that occupies a definite territory and has an organized government with the power to make and enforce laws without approval from any higher authority.



- The term *nation* commonly refers to an independent state or country.
- A nation is a group of people united by bonds of race, language, custom, tradition, and, sometimes, religion.



- A *nation-state* is a country in which the of both the nation and the state coincide.
- The U.S.A is an example of a nation-state. France is also an example.



- States share four essential features : population, territory, sovereignty, and government .

- *Government* is the institution through which the state maintains social order, provides public services, and enforces decisions that are binding on all people living within the state.





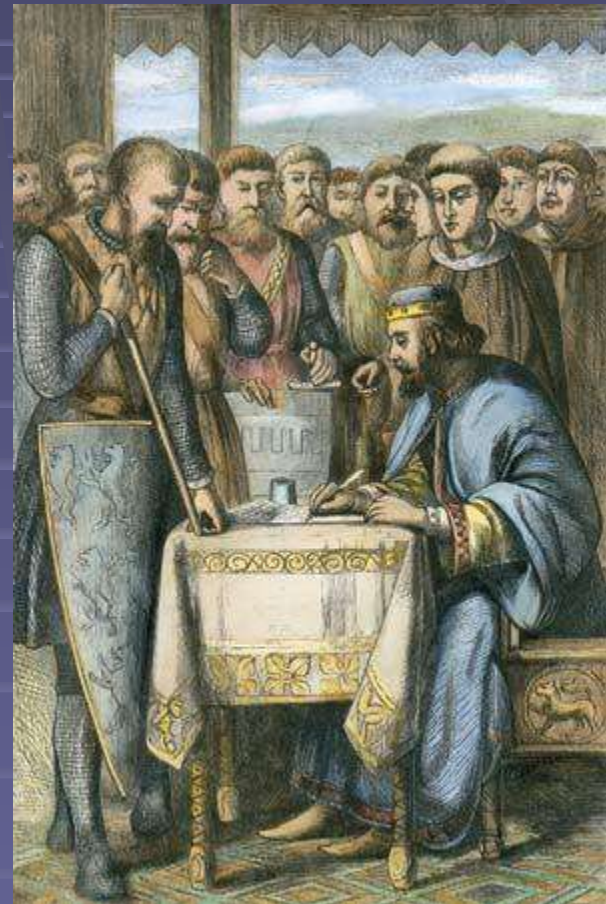
- The *evolutionary theory* holds the natural development of government came out of early family units.
- The *force theory states* one person or a small group claimed control over an area and forced all within it to submit to that person's or group's rule.

The *divine right* is the doctrine that states the right of rules in a monarch (one ruler) is developed directly from God and is only accountable to God because God created the state.

- The ideas of “limited government” shaped the constitutional government of the U.S.
- In 1215, King John of England was forced to sign the *Magna Carta*
- . Magna Carta required King [John](#) to proclaim certain rights ([freemen](#)), respect certain [legal procedures](#), and accept that his [will](#) could be [bound by the law](#). It protected certain rights of the King's subjects, whether free or fettered supported what became the [writ](#) of [habeas corpus](#), allowing appeal against unlawful imprisonment.



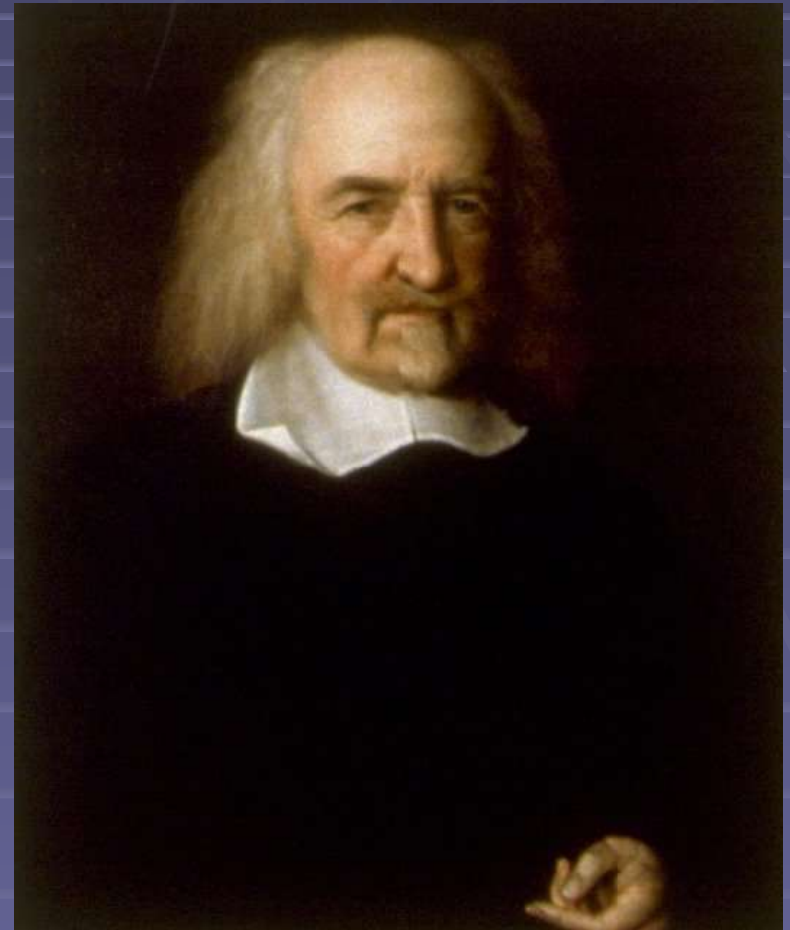
- **Petition of Right, 1628**, a statement of civil liberties sent by the English Parliament to [Charles I.](#)
- The Petition of asserted four principles: no taxes may be levied without consent of Parliament; no subject may be imprisoned without cause shown habeas ; no soldiers may be quartered upon the citizenry; martial law may not be used in time of peace.



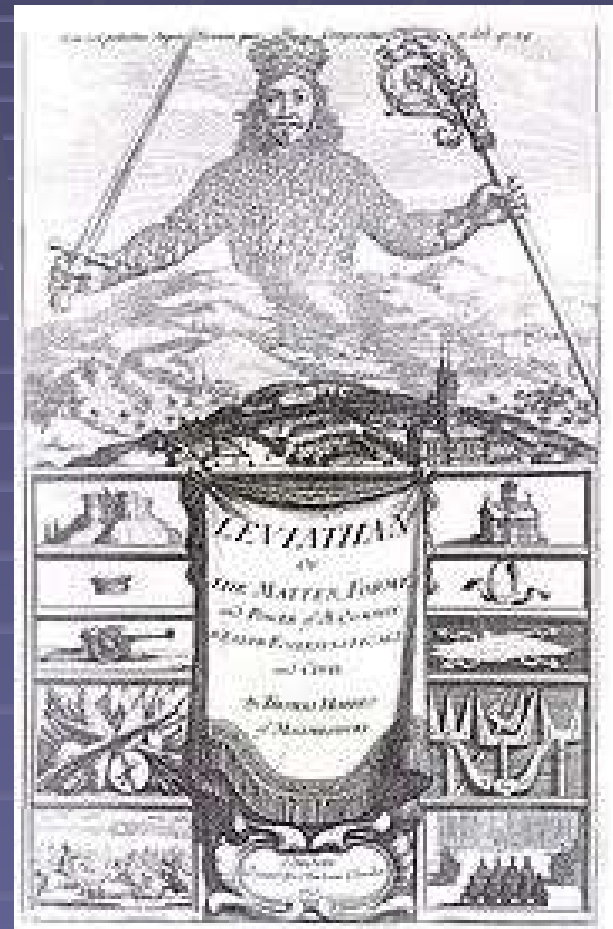
- The *English Bill of Rights* names certain rights to which subjects and permanent residents of a constitutional monarchy were thought to be entitled . Asserting subjects' right to petition the monarch, as well as to bear arms in defense. It also sets out certain constitutional requirements of the Crown to seek the consent of the people, as represented in parliament.



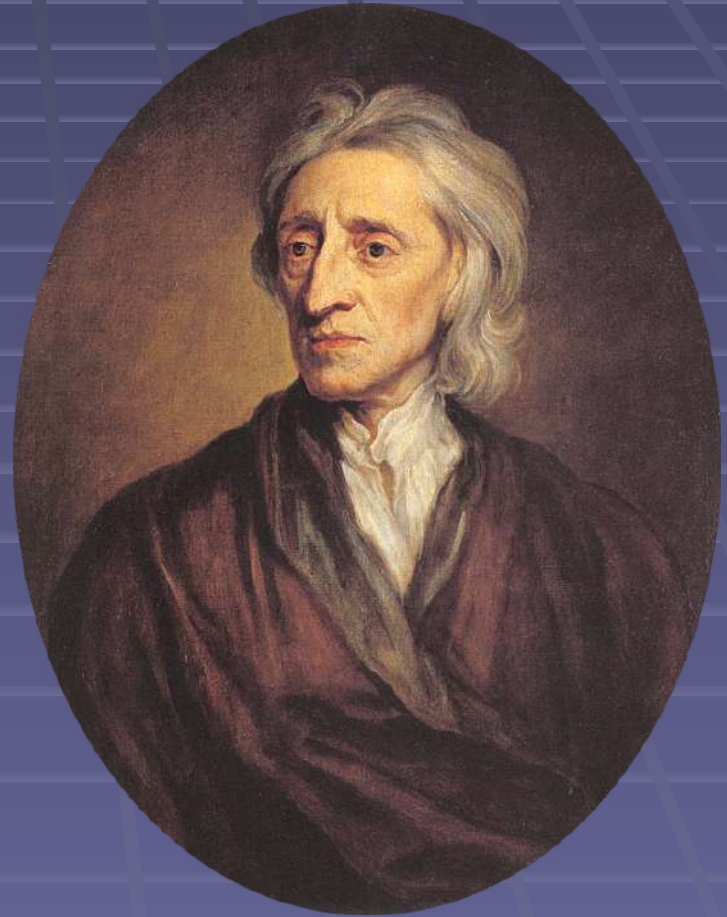
- Tomas Hobbes was one of the first to theorize on the *social contract*.
- *Social contract* is by contract people gave up to the state the power needed to maintain order. The state, in turn, agreed to protect the citizens.
- In [Leviathan](#), Hobbes set out his doctrine of the foundation of [states](#) and legitimate [governments](#) - based on [social contract theories](#). He talks about the “state of nature” – what life would be like without government.



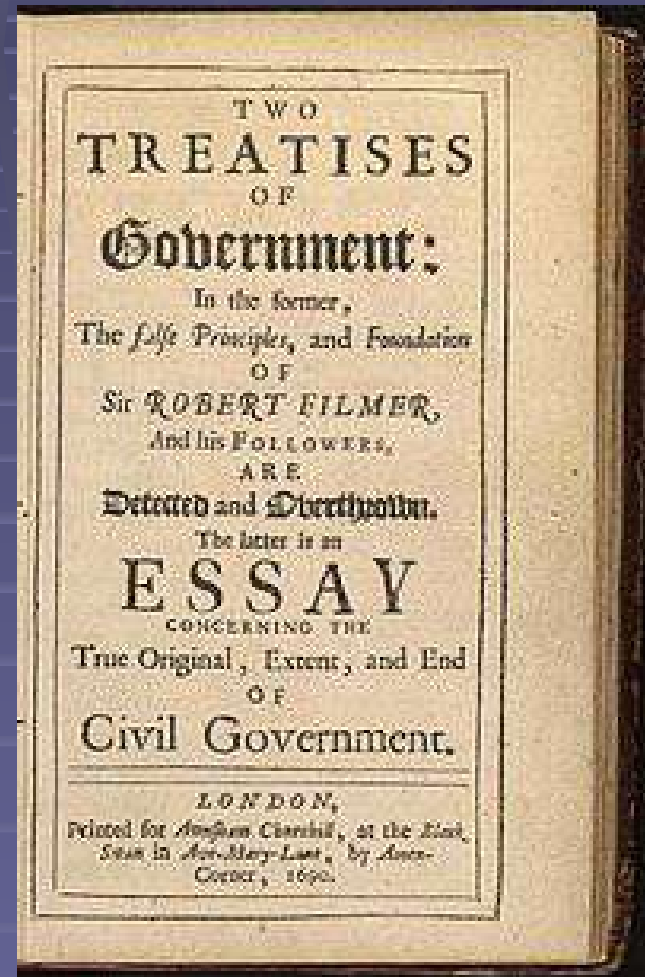
- The state of nature inevitably leads to conflict, a "war of all against all" and thus lives that are "solitary, poor, nasty, brutish, and short" (xiii).
- To escape this state of war, men agree to a [social contract](#) . All individuals in that society give up their natural rights for the sake of protection. Any abuses of power by this authority are to be accepted as the price of peace. However, he also states that in severe cases of abuse, rebellion is expected. In particular, the doctrine of [separation of powers](#) is rejected. The sovereign must control civil, military, judicial and ecclesiastical powers.



- John Locke took social contract a step further.
- People were endowed with the right of life, liberty, and property. To keep these rights, they willingly contracted to give power to a governing authority. When government failed to preserve the rights of the people, the people had the right to break the contract.
- He influenced the American *Declaration of Independence*.



- The *Two Treatises of Government* by [John Locke](#).
- People need government to keep social order because they have not figured out a way to live in groups without conflict.
- *The Second Treatise* outlines a theory of political or [civil society](#) based on [natural rights](#) and [contract theory](#).





- *The Spirit of Laws* was published anonymously by [Montesquieu](#).
- Montesquieu stressed the separation of powers, the abolition of slavery, the preservation of civil liberties, the rule of law, and the idea that politics and laws should reflect the social and geographical character of each particular community.

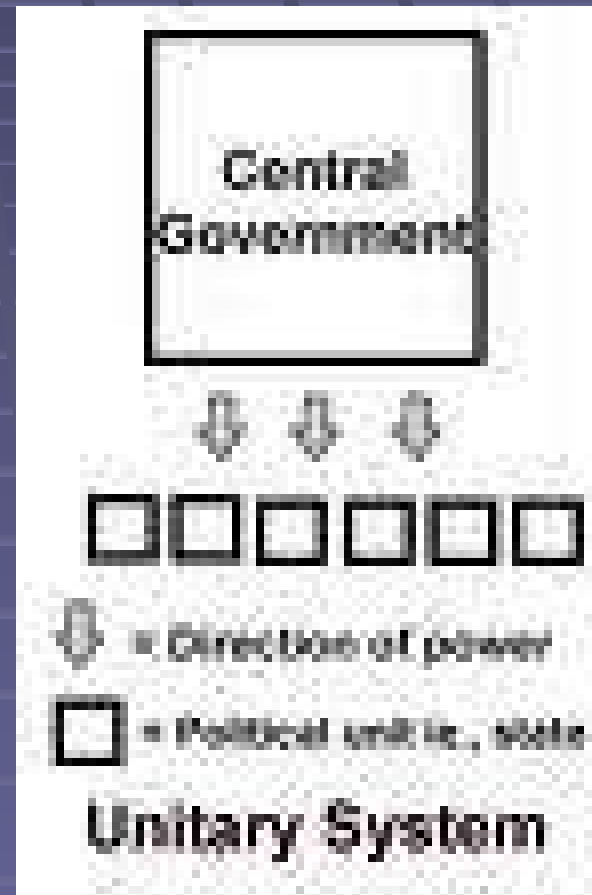


- Government serves four purposes: (1.) to maintain social order; (2.) to provide public services; (3.) to provide for national security and a common defense; and (4.) to provide and control the economic system.
- Government must make decisions that are binding to all citizens. It has the authority to require all individuals to obey these decisions and the power to punish those who do not obey them.

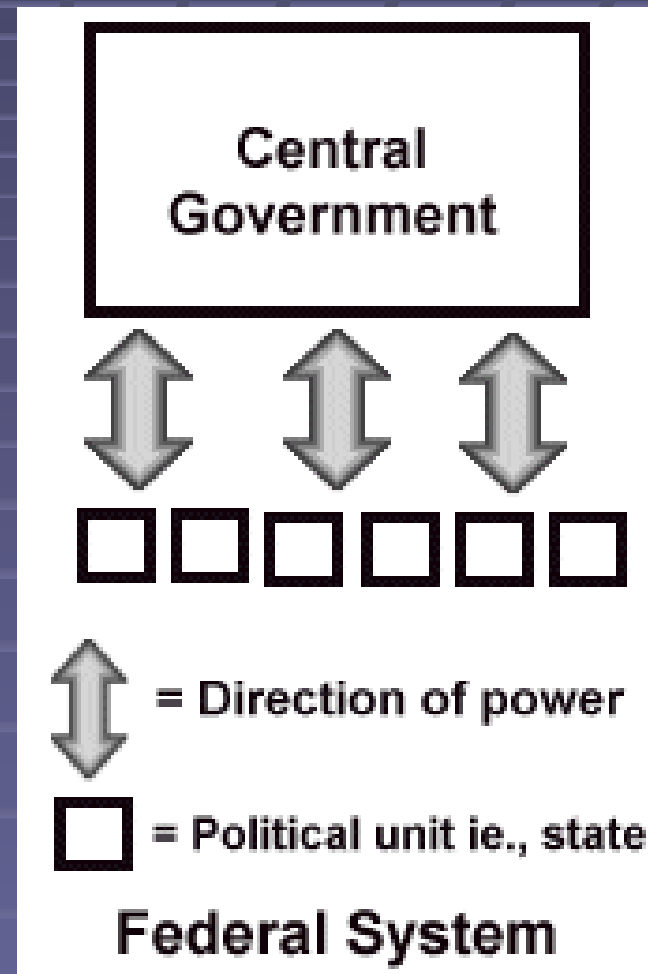
- The decisions of government are authoritative – they can be enforced upon all society.
- It gets its power from 2 sources – legitimacy and coercive force.
- Legitimacy is the willingness of citizens to obey the government.
- Coercive force comes from the police, judicial, and military institutions of government.



- Governments range in size and type. Most larger countries have several levels of government – national, state, and local.
- A *unitary system* gives all key powers to the national or central government. The central government can still set up other local or state governments.
- China is an example of unitary government



- The *federal system* divides the powers of government between the national government and state or provincial governments.
- Each state has sovereignty in some areas.
- The U.S. is an example.



- A *confederacy* is a loose union of independent states.
- The Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), formerly known as the Soviet Union.

Central  
Government



↑ = Direction of power

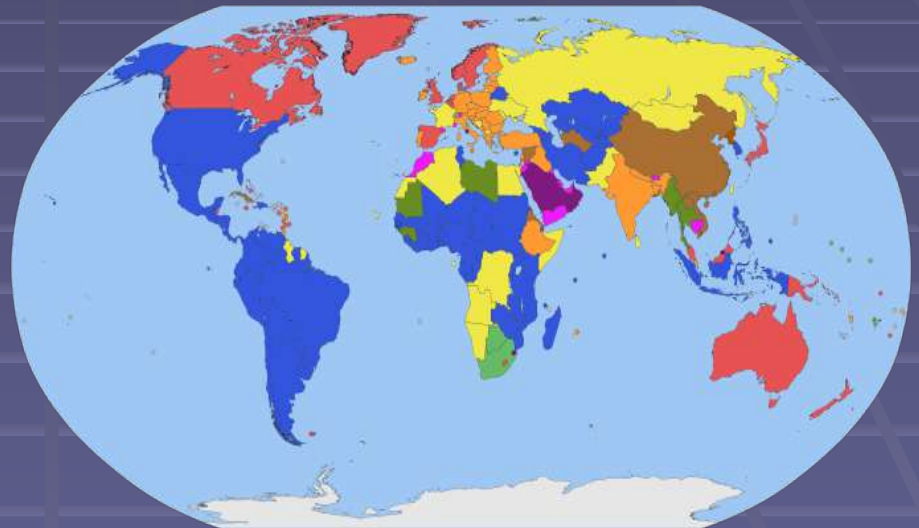
□ = Political unit ie., state

**Confederation**

- A *constitution* is a plan that provides the rules for government.
- It has 3 major purposes: (1.) it sets out ideals that the people bound by the constitution believe in and share; (2.) it establishes the basic structure of government and defines the government's powers and duties; and (3.) it provides the supreme law for the country.



- A *constitutional government* refers to a government in which a constitution has authority to place clearly recognized limits on the power of those who govern.
- Constitutional government is limited government.





- Constitutions are incomplete for 2 reasons: no written constitution can spell out all the laws, customs, and ideas that grow around the document itself; and, it does not reflect the actual practice of government in a country.
- The main body sets out the plan for government – it describes the relationship between the national and state governments. It is divided into articles and sections.
- Constitutions provide the supreme law of the land.

# Purpose of Preamble

- The **Preamble to the United States Constitution** is a brief introductory statement of the Constitution's fundamental purposes and guiding principles. It states in general terms, and courts have referred to it as reliable evidence of, the Founding Fathers' intentions regarding the Constitution's meaning and what they hoped the Constitution would achieve.



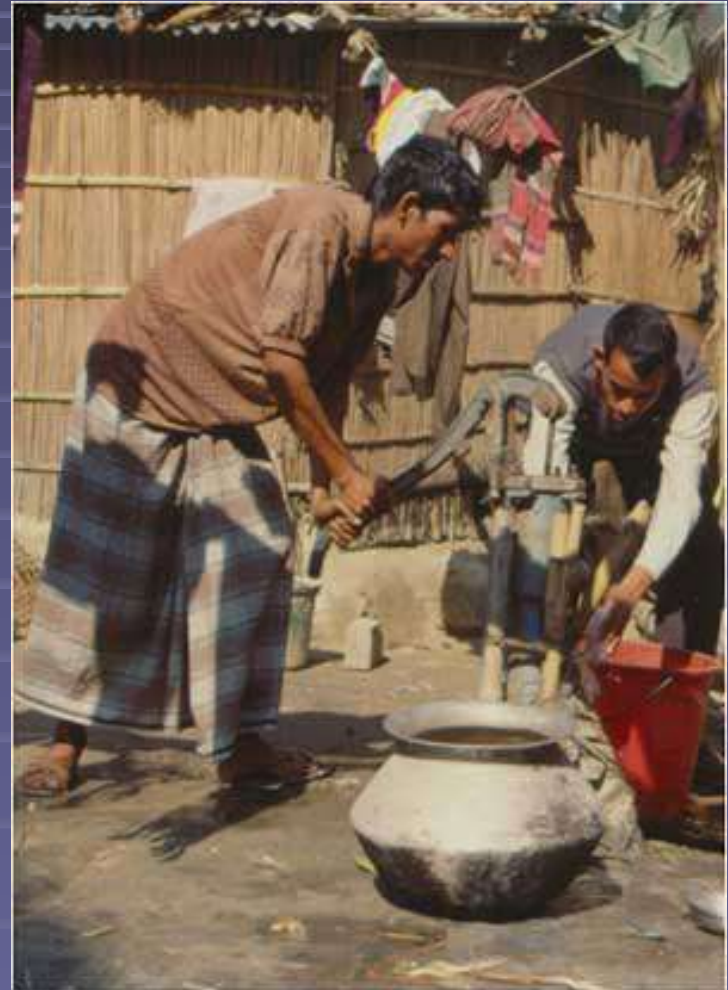
- *Politics* is the effort to control or influence the conduct and policies of government.
- There are 2 major political parties in the U.S. – Democratic and Republican.



- *Industrialized nations* are large nations with large industries and advanced technology that provides a more comfortable way of life than developing nations.
- Characteristics: a large base of productive capital, sophisticated banking systems and financial markets, a variety of industries producing a broad range of products, and vigorous and varied international trade. Industrialized nations also have well established systems of government and law, and provide educational opportunities for their people.



- *Developing nations* are those developing industry.
- Characteristics: the economy relies on a few export crops, farming is conducted by primitive methods and, rapid population growth threatens the supply of food.
- Most are in Africa, Asia, and Latin America.





- *Monarchy* is a form of government where a king, queen, or emperor exercises the supreme power of government.
- Absolute monarchs have complete and unlimited power to rule.
- Constitutional monarchs share power with elected legislatures and serve as ceremonial leaders.

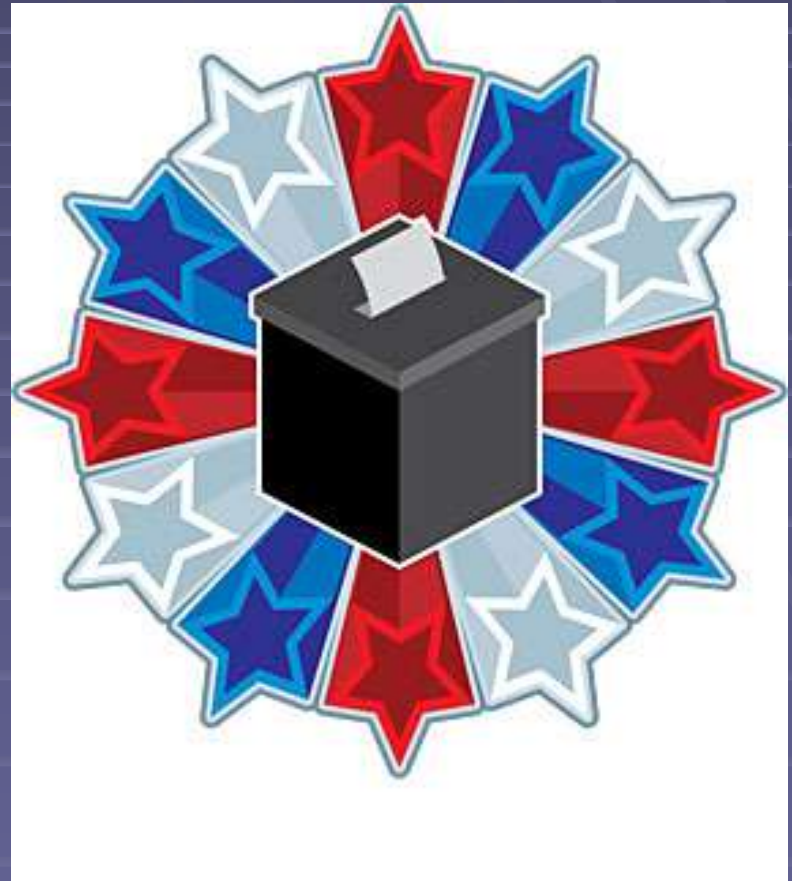


- *Oligarchy* is a system of government in which a small group holds power.
- Power comes from wealth, military power, social position, or a combination of these elements.





- *Democracy* is any system of government in which rule is by the people.
- A key to democracy is that the people hold the power.
- Direct democracy – is the people govern themselves by voting on issues individually as citizens.
- Representative democracy – the people elect representatives and give them the power to make laws and run government.

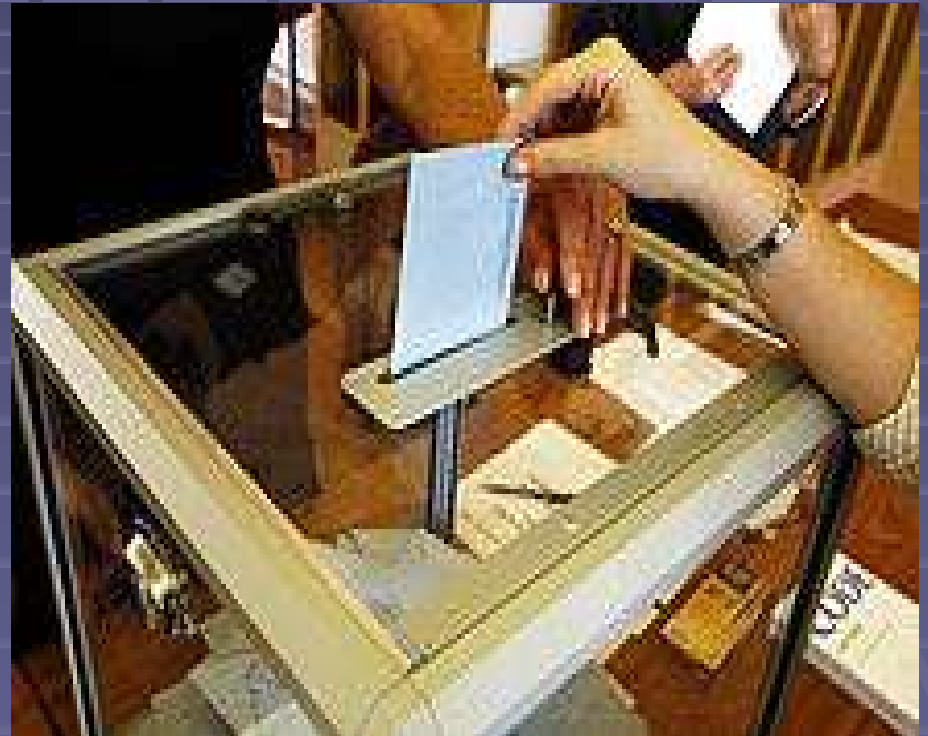


- A *political party* is a group of individuals with broad common interests who organize to nominate candidates for office, win elections, and determine public policy.



# Characteristics of Free Elections

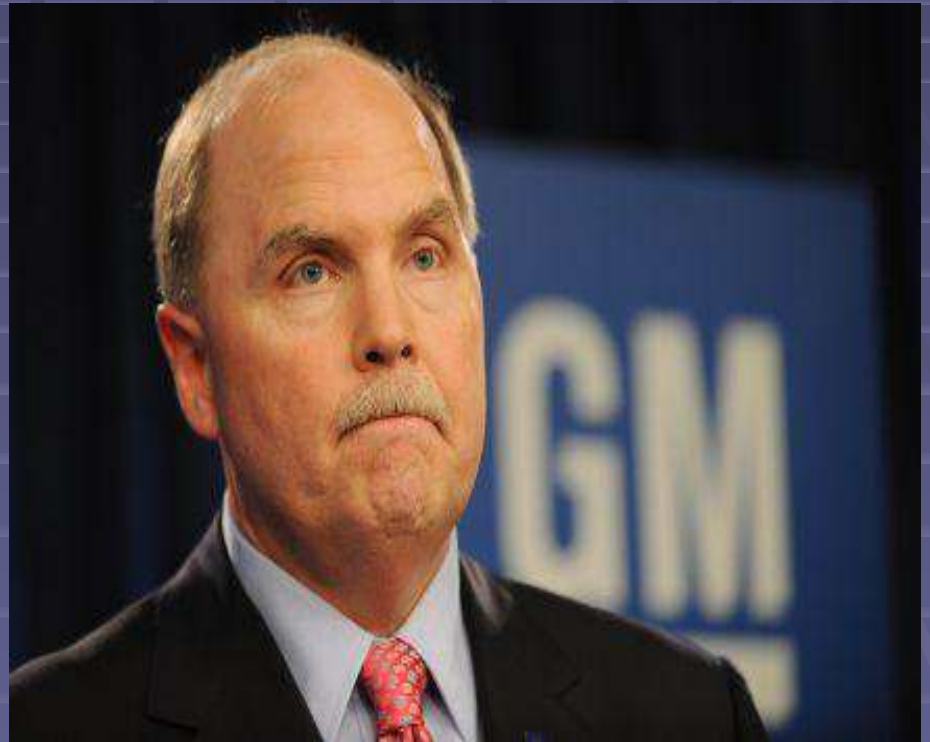
- 5 Characteristics of Free Elections:
  - 1.) Suffrage
  - 2.) Nomination
  - 3.) Electoral System
  - 4.) Scheduling
  - 5.) Election Campaigns



- **Free enterprise** - Business governed by the laws of supply and demand, not restrained by government interference, regulation or subsidy, also called free market.



- Government has 3 major economic decisions to make: (1.) providing citizens with economic opportunities or resources; (2.) pass laws that shape the economic environment of the nation; and, (3.) make choices that distribute public services and benefits among citizens.



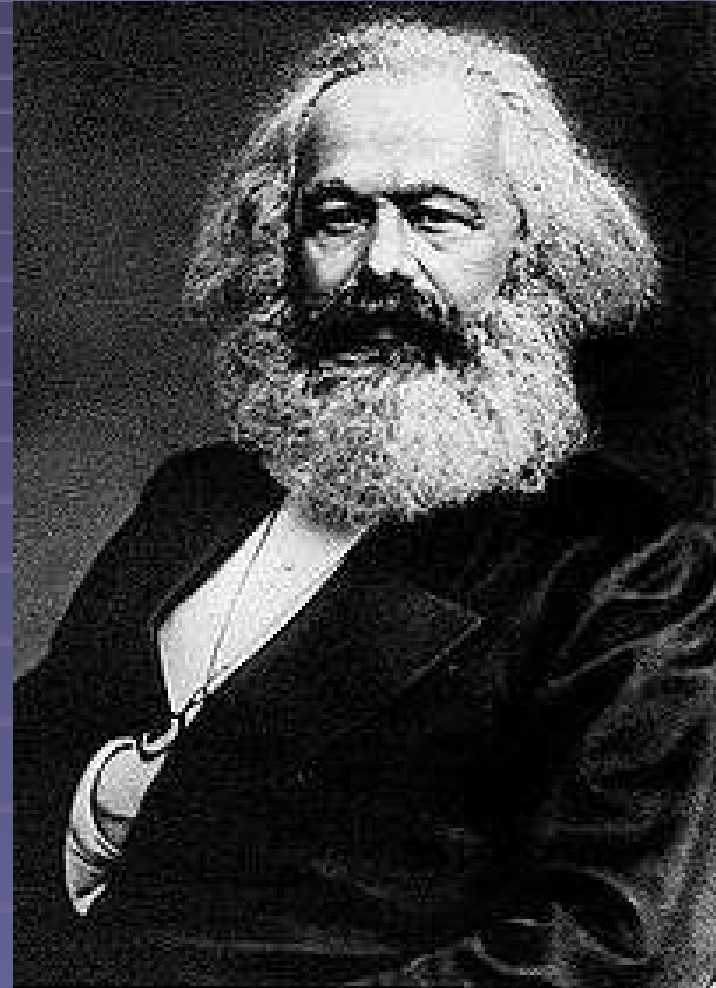
- *Capitalism* is an economic system providing free choice and individual incentive for workers, investors, consumers, and business enterprises.
- *Free market* is an economic system in which buyers and sellers make free choices in the marketplace.
- *Laissez-faire* means “to let alone” – government should keep its hands off the economy.



- *Socialism* is an economic system where the government owns the basic means of production, distributes products and wages, and provides social services such as health care and welfare.



- Karl Marx was a German whose ideas are credited as the foundation of modern communism.
- He wrote The Communist Manifesto.
- Marx argued that capitalism, will inevitably produce internal tensions which will lead to its destruction. He believed socialism will replace capitalism, and lead to a stateless, classless society called pure communism.





- *Communism* is a political and economic philosophy that believes that one class would evolve, property would be held in common, and there would be no need for government.



- In communist countries, government planners decide how much to produce, what to produce, how to distribute the goods and services provided, and how much to charge for these goods and services. This is called a *command economy*,



# Functions of Government:

## 1.) Form a more perfect Union



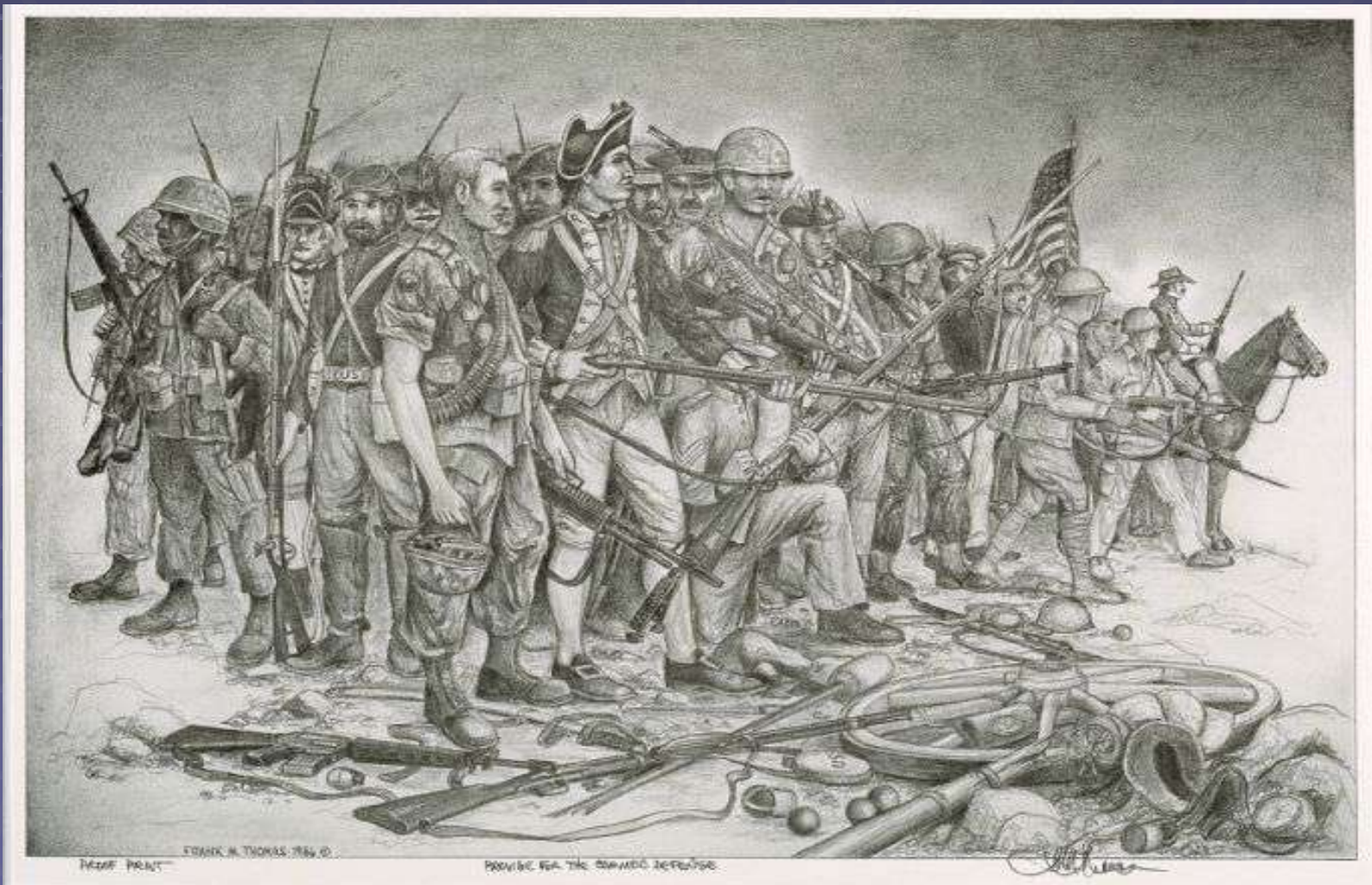
## 2.) Establish Justice



# 3.) Insure domestic Tranquility



# 4.) Provide for the common defense



# 5.) Promote the general welfare



## 6.) Secure the blessings of Liberty





- The End.