

What was Sept 17th? Constitution Day 222 years old

Last time we met I talked about Ruler's Law vs. Anarchy and we drew that virtual line – in the middle remember is what? PEOPLE'S LAW. Remember that there was no existing government who had ever had this but that's what the Founding Father's wanted to get to.

So what was happening back in the 1700's

Let's discuss a little bit about timelines – what happened when

Stamp Act 1765 – Kinda started the whole ball rolling – England was trying to pay war debts and saw the colonies as an easy way to get money

5 years later

Boston Massacre 1770- how many were killed? 3 + 2 more died later from wounds –

3 years later

Boston Tea Party 1773 – couple of hundred participated

Lexington & Concord 1775 – how many minutemen in Lexington? 77 How many in Concord? 400

You see it only takes a few to start a revolution – but it takes the majority to win one

Declaration of Independence 1776

Cornwallis surrenders at Yorktown 1781 – end of the revolution – 6 years of war

Constitution written 1787 6 years after the war was over

Took 2 years to ratify it

Washington becomes 1st president 1789 24 years after the Stamp Act

What was the “LAW OF THE LAND” from 1776 – 1789????

Articles of Confederation – sounds pretty good but remember at the time the United States was really “The Loose connection of 13 Independent Country States” They were anything but United. Each state had tariffs, over 2000 entities were printing US money – including Britain. And we were fighting a war with the most powerful nation in the world using volunteers who signed up for 90 or 180 days that we couldn’t feed, clothe or arm. British Troops sat on our northern borders, Spain was trying to seize land east of the Mississippi – New England states were threatening to succeed and the Southern States were saying “Great- we’ll help you pack”

Under the Articles of Confederation

There was NO EXECUTIVE

NO JUDICIAL SYSTEM

NO ABILITY TO TAX OR RAISE MONEY

NO POWER TO ENFORCE DECREES or make laws

So – pretty close to Rulers Law or No Law? Anarchy – and what often happens after anarchy? Someone comes in, takes over and you’re right back at Ruler’s Law.

James Madison and a few others said “We’ve got to do something – let’s get representatives from every state and meet to try and resolve this” Some thought this was a good plan but it needed one person’s approval – in fact if he wasn’t going to participate they agreed it wouldn’t work - -Who was that man?

George Washington – but George said he was retired from public life – not interested - wished them well but he was happy on Mt. Vernon – after all he had done his part by winning a hopeless war.

Each meeting I’ll do a short profile of the signers of the document

Tonight I'll start with James Madison – from Virginia – was 36 years old, had to borrow money to get to the convention. Was elected to his first public office as State representative at age 25 and was elected member of the continental congress at 28 – our 4th president – often called “Father of the Constitution” due to his contributions – especially the “checks and Balances” of government.

Madison rejected the view of Congress that the General Welfare provision of the [Taxing and Spending Clause](#) justified the bill, stating:

“ Such a view of the Constitution would have the effect of giving to Congress a general power of legislation instead of the defined and limited one understood to belong to them, the terms "common defense and general welfare" embracing every object and act within the purview of a legislative trust.

Today the “general Welfare” provision is used to justify Health Care Reform, Private business takeover, Cap and Trade, forcing states to adopt Federal regulations, and much more.

When we meet next time we'll cover some of the debate regarding the constitution, what individual states wanted, consensus and “the three great compromises” .