

Grace Perez

Law day 2025

The Articles

As my foot stepped out of the time machine, I felt the usually cold air from the lab turn into warm, sultry air, and as the atmosphere changed, so did my emotions. I went from feeling certain and secure to feeling a very tense sensation. I looked around to see where I was at. I was in a town where the buildings were all made of brick. All of the women in the town were wearing their dresses and the men were wearing their tights. I looked up to see if I was in the right time line and above me was a sign that said 1787. I began walking down the street and at every corner I turned to I could hear heated discussions. One of the conversations I heard seemed to catch my attention

"Did you hear?" one of the men said. "The Articles of Confederation are a complete failure. They are way too weak, we need a much stronger central government." A man that was dressed in a plain black coat and hat that was behind me shook his head. "A strong government? Why would we even want that? That's exactly what we fought against during the Revolution. If we get a strong central government this place that we live in now will become a monarchy. We will lose all of our freedoms and rights!" I started to listen to all of the conversations around me. All of the men and women I passed by were all talking about politics, each word that came out of their mouths grew with more and more emotion. I could tell that this was a very difficult time in the U.S history but the Articles seem to be testing to see how good the foundation of the nation is.

My heart started to pound a bit faster after I realized that I was witnessing the great debates between all of the Federalists and Anti-federalists. I have obviously studied about this time before

coming here but hearing and witnessing them in person was something completely different. All of the people here weren't just fighting over their opinions ,they were fights over the future of America.

Each argument kept on growing more and more intense."We need to bring a strong central government to order. This country is already way too divided as it is!"The first man argued,"Without it all of the states will fall off and we'll never be able to keep the country safe from the foreign countries or have a strong economy."The anti-federalist gave him a dirty look and scoffed,"If we give the federal government too much power it will of lead in to dictatorship. That's why we need to keep the states sovereign. It will be a few men who will take control of all of the states . It is way too risky."

In one of the books I read were the arguments between Alexander Hamilton and Thomas Jefferson. Hearing.Hearing all of these words come out of these people made me realize something; They were actually living through all of this. The debate I was watching and hearing right now was alive! I needed to collect more information.

Should I go and join them? I am so scared. Who knows how insane these people can get over politics but this is my job right now. I walked over to the group and looked at the one in the center. "Excuse but can you please explain a bit more what you mean by a 'strong central government'?" All of the men turned around slowly to see who they were going to talk to. They were shocked that I had the courage to ask such a question but they also wanted to answer it.

One of the men coughed and then started speaking but I noticed that his voice got a lot more calm. "Well, the thing is that the Federalists believe that in order to keep all of the states united we need a strong central government but the thing is that the Articles of Confederation do not provide enough authority to handle the problems like trading issues and national defenses."

The man to his left added "We can not risk disunity without a strong government. Each state is acting like its very own country and if we continue like that other foreign countries could attack us. We might not be able to survive as a single nation."

"Oh what are the anti-federalists so afraid of?" I asked. They think that we are giving too much power to the central government. They say if they get too much power this whole country could turn into a dictatorship, similar to the fight we had with the British. They believe each state should be able to govern themselves without a powerful government." I nodded in agreement because I understand both sides. It is important to see both sides in this but to be honest it is difficult to let both sides be happy. No matter what side the government chose there would be people living through real consequences due to that.

I was about to ask another question until one of the men cut me off "If you want to get a better point of view you could go over to that building, that is where most of the Federalist group up to discuss the problems." I looked and all of the men and gave them a wave "Thank you so much." I started to head to the building. As soon as I stepped foot in there I was struck by this one conversation in the center of the building. I started to make my way over there but I tried to not make it noticeable I was eavesdropping. I looked over but the second I looked at their faces I knew they looked familiar. I heard one of the men from the table say the name of the man in front of him, 'Hamilton'. I soon realized that the people sitting there were Alexander Hamilton, James Madison and John Jay.

"We can not keep such a weak government." Hamilton's voice grew over the other people "The Articles are a complete joke. We need a strong and united nation that is able to take on any foreign powers. They need to be able to handle trade rights and protect the rights of the people!" Madison looked down and nodded "The government should be able to have the power to

sign any treaties and raise any army. Only after we can complete this experiment in democracy survives."

I sighed because I know that I have to go up to them and ask more questions. I turned around trying to look confident in myself and walked up to them, "Pardon me but I have heard people say that if the government is too strong it can lead to dictatorship, is that right?". Hamilton turned around very quickly and fixed his gaze on me. "That is the fear of the Anti-federalists but the thing is they fail to see that the constitution will bring a system of checks and balances. There will be three branches to the government, executive, legislative, and judicial. Each branch will hold power to each. They make sure that not one branch can gain more power than the next" Madison added "We also have the bill of rights. We will make sure that the people's rights are protected. The government will not be able to ignore these rights. This is a republic, not a monarchy."

I had always wondered how the United States had become the place it is but now losing I can finally understand how. I turned around and thanked them for talking to me. I began walking out of the door until I felt my chest drop. I opened the door to go outside but it turned into the time machine to go back home. I looked around to make sure no one was watching and luckily theory was not. I put one foot in front of the other and then I fell in.

The debates between the Federalists and Anti-Federalists had really opened up my mind. There were some cruel times during the U.S forming but it all turned out to be worth it in the end.