

February 23, 1788

Today was a mind-blowing first day. For background information, I have been sent here from the future to observe how the principles of our government were created and why. I'm looking into federalism, the separation of powers, checks and balances, and many others. But I can barely believe I get to see the beginnings of our government. So far it has been a little overwhelming, but it has also been an exciting experience .

When I first arrived I was a little shaken from the ride over. But as I gathered myself I realized I was in Philadelphia surrounded by many serious looking men flocking to Independence Hall. I knew they had just created the Constitution not too long ago but I didn't know they were meeting today! I slipped in the door and sat towards the back. I guess it was my lucky day because they talked all about the powers of the federal government. It got heated at some points, but overall I learned a lot more than I thought I would.

They covered many issues, but federalism was a big topic today. I learned that they wanted the government to only have some powers, like handling foreign issues, and trade laws between all the states and many other problems. But they also wanted the states to have a lot of authority to make their own decisions about more local problems. But one man, Mr. Madison I believe, made it very clear why it was important to have this type of balance. He told the delegates that by dividing power between the nation, and states, would make sure that one did not become too powerful or abuse such power.

Though Mr. Madison helped clear things up, I was still a little confused on how this might actually work in modern times. To be honest, I thought the executive branch had almost all the power, and the idea of splitting power sounded complicated. As we got further in the discussion it was becoming more clear on how this would happen. Later that afternoon they got to the topic of separation of powers as well as checks and balances. They explained that there that the government would be split into three different branches, the executive, legislative, and judicial branches would make this up. They said this would ensure that power would be spread out evenly but I didn't get how.



One by one they outlined how this new concept would work. The executive branch would consist of the president and the various departments and agencies that aid them. The executive branches power includes the power to enforce laws, veto a law, foreign aid and relations, and they may give executive orders. Now without the others this branch could very well become the king they revolted against. That's why there is the judicial branch.

The Judicial branch is heavily associated with checks and balances for many reasons. The judicial branch has the power to check the president and see if their actions are just or not. This is called judicial review. This is the power of the court to review the actions of the executive branch to make sure they are following the constitutional outlines. If the executive branch does something that betrays the Constitution, the court can rule that action unconstitutional and they have the power to overrule it. But that isn't the only power the judicial branch possesses, they not only limit the president's power, but they may also impeach trials and check any action they take. Now that this was explained more deeply it makes me see how the branches are able to check each other, and in the end was not as hard as everyone thought.

No matter what area of government was brought up there was always concern on how this would protect the people. Throughout these conversations an outspoken man named Alexander Hamilton talked about how the Constitution would help this new government protect citizens rights. He said with all of these new principles, no branch or person could act without being held accountable. In the end they showed me how all of these guidelines in place would really shape our government.

It's crazy to think about how this discussion is far from over but I still managed to learn the basis of how our government works. There's still a lot of tension and uncertainty in the room. Some people are still worried that this new government won't work, but many others are hopeful that it will bring stability and harmony among the states. But I can already see how important these principles are. The idea of checks and balances, separation of powers, and federalism doesn't just make sure that one branch doesn't control everything, it's about making sure

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that the voices of the people are considered and that we know that our leaders are not able to dictate our future.

At the end of the day, I feel much more educated about our government. Even though there are lots of bumps on the road ahead, I can see why these principles are so important. They keep people's rights protected, keep the branches and power balanced, and make sure that the government doesn't turn to something the people don't feel safe in. I feel just so lucky I get to be here to witness this. Even though it is my first day here, I can already feel like I can see the foundation being built in front of me! I still have lots to learn about though, so I will write more about our next meeting. Until next time, bye!