



Written by [Rebecca Terrell](#) on September 17, 2021

Constitution Day

September 17, 2021 marks the 234th anniversary of the signing of the Constitution of the United States. The Constitution forged a government unique in a world of tyrants and oppressive regimes. Because of it our country has enjoyed more than two centuries of freedom, and we have the bravery and foresight of a mere handful of individuals to thank for it.

Our Founding Fathers knew the problems in their native countries had to do not with imperfect government, but with too much of it. So they sought to limit interference in the lives of the people. They humbly acknowledged that God, not government, gives rights, and that the proper role of government is to protect those rights. This is the philosophical basis of the Constitution. Its strength lies in its simplicity. Government exists to protect citizens (i.e. “provide for the common defense”) and, otherwise, to leave them alone (i.e. “promote the general Welfare”)!



Before our Constitution was ratified, the Articles of Confederation were the law of the land. They established limited government but provided no power to tax for national defense and no means to settle disputes between States. So the Founding Fathers met in Philadelphia and debated through the hot summer months of 1787. The result was a stronger central government but one with limited powers. The document they wrote governed the government, not the people. It established unambiguous boundaries of governmental power. Just to make sure the limits were clear, they added the Bill of Rights, or the first ten amendments to the Constitution. The first nine limit the government from infringing on specific individual and States’ rights, and the tenth basically says, “If we forgot anything, you can’t do that either.”

Congress soon ratified the new law, and we still benefit from it today. Many now believe we live under a democracy. But even a cursory reading of the Constitution reveals differently. The word *democracy* does not appear even once. The Founding Fathers knew that democracies are too volatile. They are governed by the majority, by popular opinion. That sounds great until you consider that popular opinion has erroneously held such beliefs as the earth is flat, or a man named Hitler had some great ideas, or a certain innocent Man should be brutally crucified.

What did the Founding Fathers give us instead? Benjamin Franklin answered that question: “A republic ... if you can keep it.” Republics are not governed by whims of the people but by law. A republic holds in check anyone who would infringe on rights, including the government. America’s founders could have



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given us any form of government. (Indeed, there was a movement in the colonies advocating a monarchy under George Washington.) But these selfless men sacrificed short-term personal gain for, well ... you. You are now free to make your living without the government dictating what you can and can't do. You can keep the fruits of your labor without worrying about the threat of government confiscation.

This Constitution Day, please take 30 minutes to watch this video from The John Birch Society presenting, clearly and consisely, the principles of good government that made our country a land of freedom and opportunity, and a beacon of hope for the entire world.

And please take time to thank God, the Giver of your rights, for our Founding Fathers and their brilliant document, the Constitution of the United States. God bless America.

This article is adapted from an article originally posted on September 17, 2009.

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