A.W.T. PAPERS

Misc. Papers
Articles 5

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Adoption of the Federal constitution

In the time of the Roman Empire, the word constitution meant a collection of laws made by the Emperor. In modern times in relation to the government of nations, has been restricted to those rules which relate

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To the critical
structure of society
The constitution
of the United States
is contained in a
code of laws
which is the supreme
law of the land
As intelligent
thinking people
men desire to know
how we came
by these laws

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this government which in most respects is unique among the governments of the world We should bear in mind that before the revolution the colonies acted under charter from the crown, each conducting its own affairs independent

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of any other, subject only to the authority of the home government. When a conflict of interest arose in the colonies and it was determined to resist the aggressive measures of the mother country it became evident that some sort of concerted action

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the colonies, to discuss
the situation
The delegates met
Sept 5th 1774 –
This assembly was
called the first
continental congress
(who gave them the name)
This congress was
an illegal body
because the King
had forbidden
the appointment
of such delegates

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knowing how
missionaries would
be in their settlements
but they managed
to get together and
among them were
names that have
become famous
the world over
& they could
so do. & advise
with each other
as to the best course

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In the event no
redress could be
obtained, a convention
[illegible] [illegible]
a 2d Congress
[illegible] the follow-
ing year, ~~1775~~
the [illegible] of
[illegible] [illegible]
[illegible], and
[illegible] the 2d Conti-
nental Congress met
in Phil. May 10, 1775.

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The battle of Lexington
had been fought
the war had begun
now the colonies
must fight it out
together or give
up the struggle
But there was no
union - no government
no delegated powers
to do anything
Congress proceeded
to assume powers

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the wisdom of those who founded it. The enemies submitted to the inevitable and gave consent. Thus a government was formed by the consent of the governed.

Congress now set about its great and most important work, the conduct of

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of the war
"It took measures
to raise an army
and appointed one
of its members
Geo Washington commander
In a word, ~~it took~~

any matter affecting
all the people was
was taken up, but
no decision was
final until reported
back for the respective colonies

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to rest upon the discussion of independence and freedom was the sentiment in favor of it was by no means unanimous to the last moment the king and his councillors were pleaded with to grant the reasonable demands of the colonists

when all rebellion
would cease
There was no response
to this, then came
"the parting of the ways"
The declaration was
made to the world
that "these united
colonies are free
and independent
states, with their
freedom the states
were obliged to

reorganise their own
personality, instead
of the constitutions written
constitutions previously
adopted by them
which to some extent
became the basis
of the federal
constitution
The Continental
Congress was well
aware that it had
no real authority; that

There was no real
union and if the
cause for which
the war was being
waged was to have
any chance of
success, the states
must be bound
by closer ties and
[illegible] came
recognized authority

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To this end a committee was appointed to draw up "articles of Confederation"

A draft was submitted in a few days but it took a year and a half of discussion before a final draft was adopted. It was three years and a half before all the states had ratified them

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When they were duly
ratified, and
[illegible], Perry [illegible]
was acting [illegible]
a written constitution
[illegible] of the [illegible]
years [illegible] the [illegible]
[illegible] anything like
a real government
was established
[illegible] realized
it was not a strong
government but
it answered the needs

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of the house, Under
it the war was
brought to a successful
conclusion and
peace with England
declared two years
later, the peace
treaty being signed
at Paris 1783

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Under peace conditions
the weakness of the
government became
increasingly evident
It had no power
to levy taxes or
compel the states
to do anything
If money was needed
a requisition could
be made on a state for
it which the state could
pay or not as it chose

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[illegible]
[illegible] in
Dissensions arose
[illegible] the states
and within this
[illegible]
[illegible] quarrels
with Congress and
some states threatened
to secede and set up
their own independence
One faction advocated
a monarchy fearing

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Congress [illegible] finally
passed resolution [illegible]
a convention to
revise the Articles
[illegible] making such
alterations as would
make the government
equal to the needs
of the nation

This [illegible] this
convention met in
Phil. May 24th 1787
It was a momentous event

the fate of a nation
was in their hands
there had come
together the most
distinguished
body of men
that had ever
assembled in America
It was a hard
task they had before
them. If the Republic
was to live it must
have a government

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~~that~~ governed, laws
that were by some
authority, that ~~must~~ would
be recognized
they ~~was~~ had no prec-
edent to guide them
they could avoid
the errors and
weaknesses of the
past and adapt those
state institutions
which had been
proved to be strong

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and unanimity
The conference so
lasted nearly four
months, and so
warmly were the
debates, so irreconcilable
the conflict of opinions
that sometimes the
convention was
on the point of dis
solution without
accomplishing
anything

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The details were worked out. The work of the convention was done within a year. When 11 states had ratified the new constitution and Congress voted that the new constitution would go into operation the first Wednesday in March 1787
Within 14 months all the states had ratified it.

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volumes have been
written about the
constitution of the
United States. Mr Gladstone
said it was the
most wonderful work struck off
by the mind and
purpose of man.
It has been called a ruler
how to those who
framed it but as
we have seen it
was.
born of the knowledge

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[illegible]

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this government
of the people, by
the people, for the
people, " President Lincoln
asked us, in his
Gettysburg address,
to highly resolve
that it shall not
perish from the earth

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