

Activity Three: The Connecticut Compromise: "partly national, partly federal"

Student Name _____ Date _____

Read the following documents and write a one to two page essay answering the following question:
What led the Convention to eventually accept the Connecticut Compromise, and why did some delegates continue to oppose it?

1. Sherman proposes Connecticut Compromise (11 June 1787)

<http://www.yale.edu/lawweb/avalon/debates/611.htm>

Mr. SHARMAN proposed that the proportion of suffrage in the 1st. branch should be according to the respective numbers of free inhabitants; and that in the second branch or Senate, each State should have one vote and no more....The smaller States would never agree to the plan on any other principle than an equality of suffrage in this branch. Mr. ELSWORTH seconded the motion. On the question for allowing each State one vote in the 2d. branch.

Massts. no. Cont. ay. N. Y. ay. N. J. ay. Pa. no. Del. ay. Md. ay. Va. no. N. C. no. S. C. no. Geo. no.

2. Madison opposes equal representation in the Senate (19 June 1787)

<http://www.yale.edu/lawweb/avalon/debates/619.htm>

Mr. MADISON... The great difficulty lies in the affair of Representation [in the Senate]; and if this could be adjusted, all others would be surmountable...If they [the states] shd. be entitled to vote according to their proportions of inhabitants, all would be right & safe. Let them have an equal vote, and a more objectionable minority than ever might give law to the whole...

3. The Convention compromises on election by state legislatures in the Senate (25 June 1787)

<http://www.yale.edu/lawweb/avalon/debates/625.htm>

On the question to agree "that the members of the 2d. branch be chosen by the indivl. Legislatures"
Masts. ay. Cont. ay. N. Y. ay. N. J. ay. Pa. no. Del. ay. Md. ay. Va. no. N. C. ay. S. C. ay. Geo. ay.

4. Franklin calls for a prayer (28 June 1787)

<http://www.yale.edu/lawweb/avalon/debates/628.htm>

[Dr. FRANKLIN.] The small progress we have made after 4 or five weeks close attendance & continual reasonings with each other – our different sentiments on almost every question, several of the last producing as many noes as ays, is methinks a melancholy proof of the imperfection of the Human Understanding. We indeed seem to feel our own want of political wisdom, since we have been running about in search of it...

In this situation of this Assembly, groping as it were in the dark to find political truth, and scarce able to distinguish it when presented to us, how has it happened, Sir, that we have not hitherto once thought of humbly applying to the Father of lights to illuminate our understandings?...I have lived, Sir, a long time, and the longer I live, the more convincing proofs I see of this truth- that God Governs in the affairs of men. And if a sparrow cannot fall to the ground without his notice, is it probable that an empire can rise without his aid?...

I therefore beg leave to move – that henceforth prayers imploring the assistance of Heaven, and its blessings on our deliberations, be held in this Assembly every morning before we proceed to business...

5. Ellsworth revives the Connecticut Compromise proposal (29 June 1787)

<http://www.yale.edu/lawweb/avalon/debates/629.htm>

Mr. MADISON...He entreated the gentlemen representing the small States to renounce a principle wch. was confessedly unjust, which cd. never be admitted, & if admitted must infuse mortality into a Constitution which we wished to last forever...

Mr. GERRY...The injustice of allowing each State an equal vote was long insisted on. He voted for it, but it was agst. his Judgment, and under the pressure of public danger, and the obstinacy of the lesser States. The present Confederation he considered as dissolving. The fate of the Union will be decided by the Convention...He lamented that instead of coming here like a band of brothers, belonging to the same family, we seemed to have brought with us the spirit of political negotiators...

Mr. ELSEWORTH moved that the rule of suffrage in the 2d. branch be the same with that established by the articles of confederation...He hoped it would become a ground of compromise with regard to the 2d. branch. We were partly national; partly federal. The proportional representation in the first branch was conformable to the national principle & would secure the large States agst. the small. An equality of voices was conformable to the federal principle and was necessary to secure the Small States agst. the large. He trusted that on this middle ground a compromise would take place. He did not see that it could on any other. And if no compromise should take place, our meeting would not only be in vain but worse than in vain...

6. Franklin sums up the dilemma (30 June 1787)

<http://www.yale.edu/lawweb/avalon/debates/630.htm>

Docr. FRANKLIN. The diversity of opinions turns on two points. If a proportional representation takes place, the small States contend that their liberties will be in danger. If an equality of votes is to be put in its place, the large States say their money will be in danger...

7. A compromise committee is formed (2 July 1787)

<http://www.yale.edu/lawweb/avalon/debates/702.htm>

Mr. PINKNEY thought an equality of votes in the 2d. branch inadmissible...

Mr. SHARMAN. We are now at a full stop, and nobody he supposed meant that we shd. break up without doing something. A committee he thought most likely to hit on some expedient...

Mr. MADISON opposed the Commitment. He had rarely seen any other effect than delay from such Committees...

Mr. GERRY was for the Commitmt. Something must be done, or we shall disappoint not only America, but the whole world. He suggested a consideration of the State we should be thrown into by the failure of the Union... We must make concessions on both sides...

On the question "for committing," generally:

Masts. ay. Cont. ay. N. Y. ay. N. J. no. P. ay. Del. no. Md. ay. Va. ay. N. C. ay. S. C. ay. Geo. ay....

That time might be given to the Committee, and to such as chose to attend to the celebrations on the anniversary of Independence, the Convention adjourned till Thursday.

8. Committee's compromise report (5 July 1787)

<http://www.yale.edu/lawweb/avalon/debates/705.htm>

"The Committee...submit the following Report...1. That in the 1st. branch of the Legislature each of the States now in the Union shall be allowed 1 member for every 40,000 inhabitants...[T]hat all bills for raising or appropriating money...shall originate in the 1st. branch of the Legislature, and shall not be altered or amended by the 2d. branch: and that no money shall be drawn from the public Treasury. but in pursuance of appropriations to be orginated in the 1st. branch II. That in the 2d. branch each State shall have an equal vote."

...Mr. MADISON. could not regard the exclusive privilege of originating money bills [in the 1st branch] as any concession on the side of the small States...He conceived that the Convention was reduced to the alternative of either departing from justice in order to conciliate the smaller States, and the minority of the people of the U. S. or of displeasing these by justly gratifying the larger States and the majority of the people. He could not himself hesitate as to the option he ought to make...

Mr. ELSEWORTH said he had not attended the proceedings of the Committee, but was ready to accede to the compromise they had reported. Some compromise was necessary; and he saw none more convenient or reasonable.

Mr. GERRY...If no compromise should take place what will be the consequence. A secession he foresaw would take place; for some gentlemen seem decided on it; two different plans will be proposed; and the result no man could foresee. If we do not come to some agreement among ourselves some foreign sword will probably do the work for us.

Mr. MASON...There must be some accomodation on this point, or we shall make little further progress in the work...[H]e would bury his bones in this City rather than expose his Country to the Consequences of a dissolution of the Convention without any thing being done.

9. Mason accepts the Compromise proposal (6 July 1787)

<http://www.yale.edu/lawweb/avalon/debates/706.htm>

Mr. MASON. The consideration which weighed with the Committee was that the 1st. branch would be the immediate representatives of the people, the 2d. would not. Should the latter have the power of giving away the people's money, they might soon forget the source from whence they received it. We might soon have an aristocracy...He was a friend to proportional representation in both branches; but supposed that some points must be yielded for the sake of accomodation.

10. Debate over the Compromise proposal (14 July 1787)

<http://www.yale.edu/lawweb/avalon/debates/714.htm>

Mr. WILSON...As to the privilege of originating money bills, it was not considered by any as of much moment, and by many as improper in itself. He hoped both clauses wd. be reconsidered. The equality of votes was a point of such critical importance, that every opportunity ought to be allowed, for discussing and collecting the mind of the Convention on it.

Mr. GERRY...He did not approve of a reconsideration of the clause relating to money bills. It was of great consequence. It was the corner stone of the accomodation...The Report was not altogether to his mind. But he would agree to it as it stood rather than throw it out altogether...

Mr. SHERMAN urged the equality of votes not so much as a security for the small States; as for the State Govts. which could not be preserved unless they were represented & had a negative in the Genl. Government...

Mr. MADISON expressed his apprehensions that if the proper foundation of Governmt-was destroyed, by substituting an equality in place of a proportional Representation, no proper superstructure would be raised. If the small States really wish for a Government armed with the powers necessary to secure their liberties, and to enforce obedience on the larger members as well as on themselves he could not help thinking them extremely mistaken in their means. He reminded them of the consequences of laying the existing confederation on improper principles. All the principal parties to its compilation, joined immediately in mutilating & fettering the Governmt. in such a manner that it has disappointed every hope placed on it...

Mr. WILSON...A vice in the Representation, like an error in the first concoction, must be followed by disease, convulsions, and finally death itself...

11. Connecticut Compromise approved (16 July 1787)

<http://www.yale.edu/lawweb/avalon/debates/716.htm>

On the question for agreeing to the whole Report as amended & including the equality of votes in the 2d. branch. it passed in the Affirmative.

Mas. divided Mr. Gerry, Mr. Strong, ay. Mr. King Mr. Ghorum no. Cont. ay. N.J.ay. Pena.no. Del.ay. Md.ay. Va.no. N.C. ay. Mr. Spaight no. S.C.no. Geo.no.

Activity Three: The Connecticut Compromise: “partly national, partly federal”

Student Name _____ Date _____

Graphic Organizer for Document Analysis in Activity Three: “The Connecticut Compromise: partly national, partly federal”

Directions: As you read each document in this lesson, use the following to record important ideas.

Document 1: Sherman proposes Connecticut Compromise
Date: 11 June 1787
Analysis (list the significant event(s) or debate(s) that took place on this day):
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Document 2: Madison opposes equal representation in the Senate
Date: 19 June 1787
Analysis (list the significant event(s) or debate(s) that took place on this day):
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Document 3: Convention compromises on election by state legislatures in the Senate
Date: 25 June 1787
Analysis (list the significant event(s) or debate(s) that took place on this day):
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Document 4: Franklin calls for a prayer
Date: 28 June 1787
Analysis (list the significant event(s) or debate(s) that took place on this day):
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Document 5: Ellsworth revives the Connecticut Compromise proposal
Date: 29 June 1787
Analysis (list the significant event(s) or debate(s) that took place on this day):
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Document 6: Franklin sums up the dilemma
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Analysis (list the significant event(s) or debate(s) that took place on this day):
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Document 7: A compromise committee is formed
Date: 2 July 1787
Analysis (list the significant event(s) or debate(s) that took place on this day):
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Document 8: Committee's compromise report
Date: 5 July 1787
Analysis (list the significant event(s) or debate(s) that took place on this day):
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Document 9: Mason accepts the compromise proposal
Date: 6 July 1787
Analysis (list the significant event(s) or debate(s) that took place on this day):
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Document 10: Debate over the compromise proposal
Date: 14 July 1787
Analysis (list the significant event(s) or debate(s) that took place on this day):
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Document 11: Connecticut Compromise approved
Date: 16 July 1787
Analysis (list the significant event(s) or debate(s) that took place on this day):
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