

How did the constitution guard against tyranny



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Americans desperately fight against the poison of tyranny with their best weapon, the Constitution. During the Colonial Period, King George III, demanded many things from the colonists. These demands were caused by the aftermath of the French and Indian War. England had increasing debts, so the king raised the taxes of both America and England. The increase of taxes caused anger to rise from the Americans, which allowed a roll of events to unfold. After many harsh exchanges between the colonists and King George III, America declared its independence on July 4, 1776.

Soon after the declaration, things began to heat up as fight over representation in government began to be more debated. Many times tyranny was mentioned, allowing the creation of the Constitution. The Constitution guarded against tyranny. The Constitution guarded against tyranny in four ways: federalism, separation of powers, checks and balances, big states vs. small states/ The Great Compromise. One part of the Constitution that helped Americans was federalism.

The central and reserved government share powers, but also have separate powers. Document A) Federalism prevented one person or group from obtaining absolute power by creating two governments that have shared but separated powers. A quote by James Madison from Federalist Paper #51, 1788, states that " In the compound republic of America, the power surrendered by the people is first divided between two distinct governments, and the portion allotted to each subdivided among distinct and separate departments. " The word " compound," from the beginning of the quote means two pieces or two pieces of government, called a bicameral government.

The part where it says, "...the power surrendered by the people is first divided between two distinct governments, and the portion allotted to each subdivided among distinct and separate departments," means there will be two parts in government concerning the country and states, allowing one group to have power to restrain the other group from gaining too much power. This is the same with America's enumerated powers and reserved powers; enumerated powers meaning the central government, and the reserved powers meaning the states' government.

These two governments residing within America control each other from getting out of hand; in this way federalism protects us from tyranny. The three branches of government also known as the legislative, judicial, and executive, helped guard against tyranny, by separation of powers. The main idea of a quote by James Madison states that, all three branches of government lean on each other, yet have separate but equal powers.

(Document B) Separation of powers, created by the three branches of government, helped guard against tyranny, by allowing the three divisions to lean on each other, so that if one group did something that went out of hand, they could do something about it.

In James Madison's Federalist Paper #47, he states that, " The accumulation of all powers, legislative, executive, and judiciary, in the same hands, whether of one, a few, or many, and whether hereditary, self-appointed, or elective, may be justly pronounced the very definition of tyranny... (L)iberty requires that the three great departments of power should be separate and distinct. " The beginning of the quote defines the outcome of what would

happen if one person or group were to accumulate all the powers of the legislative, executive, and judiciary.

The ending of the quote states that if liberty is wanted, the three divisions of government must coincide with each other to create a balance. Checks and balances are yet another part of the Constitution that guarded against tyranny. The three branches of government check each other's power and create balance. (Document C) The system of checks and balances helped the judicial, legislative, and executive branches to watch each other and keep each other at the same level.

Stated by James Madison in Federalist Paper #51, "...the constant aim is to divide and arrange the several offices in such a manner as that they may be a check on the other.... (The three branches) should not be so far separated as to have no constitutional control over each other. " The meaning behind this insight on government means the three departments of the central government should divide and arrange each other so that they may be able to keep an eye on each other, but should not be so separated that they have no constitutional control over each other.

The Great Compromise, also known as the big states vs. small states compromise, aided in the fight against tyranny during the Colonial Period, by creating equal representation in government. The Great Compromise created a balance between the large and small states, by creating two houses in government. (Document D) The two houses, the House of Representatives, and the Senate, guarded against tyranny by making the House of Representatives have their representation based on population.

The Senate however, is based on equal representation. This balanced the large and small states.

According to the Constitution of the United States of America, (Article 1, Selection 2, House of Representatives), " Representatives... shall be apportioned... according to... (population)..." and, (Article 1, Section 3, Senate), "... and each senator shall have one vote. " These two statements quoted from the Constitution of the United States of America mean that in the House of Representatives all representatives will be based on the population of the state they come from. However, in the Senate, all senators will have equal vote. These two houses create a balance in representation in government between large and small states.

America fended off the infection of tyranny during the Colonial Period against King George III. In the end, America prevailed and tyranny lost, however, America won against tyranny by separating the power of their government. Logically, if you separate something it would be easier to break, yet America managed it. They were able to block tyranny from entering their premises, because tyranny allows one person or group to obtain absolute power, but the Constitution prevented that from occurring by setting up a government where everything relied on each other.

The Constitution conjured a government similar to a tower made of wooden blocks, if someone were to take control of two parts of the three branches of government, it would be like taking a block from the bottom of the wooden structure, thus making it crumble. This would be the same for America's government, because if one person or group were to have too much power

they would disrupt the balance of the government and created a possible civil war, which could lead to anarchy.