

Why has the power of the federal government expanded

[Government](#)



Kenneth A. Cherisol AMH 2020 Prof. John Fitzgerald Nov 17, 2010 But WHY? Why has the power of the federal government expanded so significantly? Was this shift in power from state governments to the federal government necessary? Government power took a huge shift from state government to federal government during and after the civil war. Although President Franklin D Roosevelt's new deal is often considered the pivotal point that caused this shift, the major event attributing to this shift in power was the civil war. The first event that led to a growth in federal power was the ratification of the Constitution in 1789.

Although the constitution is to protect the right of individuals and limit the power of government it led to more government power so that it can accomplish its goals. Eventually the Civil war established the federal government's power over the states. After the civil war the Federal government had to enforce its power over the states to control issues such as segregation, racism and regulating states powers over the rights of citizens. The government that was established to protect the rights of its citizens now had to look out for its economic welfare.

Eventually this led the way for interest groups such as union veterans to tap into the federal treasury. The government now needed means to obtain funds for its limited treasury. Different commissions were developed to regulate aspects of the food industry, fuel, trade and eventually the entire economy. Some of these commissions include the FDA established in 1906, the Federal trade commission established in 1914 and the Federal Reserve established in 1913. Eventually in 1913 federal income tax was established providing a source of funds for the federal treasury.

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World War 1 led to future advancement of the Federal government's power even further. The federal government now regulated waterway shipping, railways were nationalized, and the United States food administration now regulated all aspects of the food industry from agriculture, distribution and sales. During the 1920's US agriculture suffered because the worldwide market for farm products was competitive. This led to the federal government passing tariffs of farm imports and in 1922 the Capper-Volstead act exempted agricultural cooperatives from antitrust laws.

Another act, the Agricultural Credits act of 1923, made it easier for farmer to receive loans from the Federal Farm Board which was established by the Agricultural Marketing Act of 1929. The federal Government also needed to regulate the power of businesses. The Federal Government began to limit the power of business by enforcing antitrust laws created by the Shermans act of 1890. Antitrust enforcement was another area in which Federal government increased in power. I believe the expansion of the Federal Government was necessary in every way to ensure the future of US.

Before the civil war the states had most of the power dictating state laws and each was concerned with better its own states not looking at the nation as a whole. This led to issues such as the south having slaves and the north not allowing slavery. Eventually this led to the civil war. The federal government is necessary to regulate the powers of the states. Acts such as the civil rights act of 1964 led to equal treatment of individuals regardless of race or color. Even after the act the federal government had to enforce the laws on the south and rebuild the south's state governments.

The federal government's power affects our daily lives from education to regulations on entertainment and safety. Due to recent economic issues states are allowing the federal government to dictate education policy in exchange for funding. Federal taxes affect our income and ensure funding for various government programs. Federal expansion is also necessary to maintain peace with other nations and ensure the safety of American lives through funding for our military and regulating foreign affairs. I believe the growth in Federal Government is necessary and without it the US would not be as influential and powerful as it is today.