

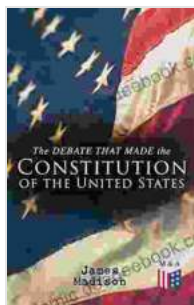
The Debate that Made the Constitution of the United States: A Tale of Compromise and Conflict



The Constitutional Convention was a gathering of delegates from the 13 American colonies that took place in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, from May 25 to September 17, 1787. The purpose of the convention was to revise the Articles of Confederation, which had been the governing document of the United States since 1781. The convention ultimately drafted a new constitution that was ratified by the states and became the supreme law of the land.

The Articles of Confederation

The Articles of Confederation were a weak and ineffective document that had failed to provide the national government with the power it needed to govern effectively. The Articles created a loose confederation of states, each of which retained its sovereignty. The national government was given only a few limited powers, such as the power to declare war and make treaties. It had no power to tax, regulate commerce, or raise an army.



The Debate That Made the Constitution of the United States by Juliet Hooker

★★★★★ 5 out of 5

Language : English
File size : 4532 KB
Text-to-Speech : Enabled
Screen Reader : Supported
Enhanced typesetting : Enabled
Word Wise : Enabled
Print length : 814 pages



The Need for a New Constitution

By the mid-1780s, it was clear that the Articles of Confederation were not working. The national government was too weak to deal with the challenges facing the country, such as economic instability, foreign threats, and internal unrest. A new constitution was needed to create a stronger national government that could effectively address these challenges.

The Constitutional Convention

In May 1787, delegates from 12 of the 13 states (Rhode Island refused to send delegates) met in Philadelphia to revise the Articles of Confederation. The delegates were a diverse group of men, including farmers, merchants, lawyers, and politicians. They represented a wide range of views on how the new government should be structured.

The Great Compromise

One of the most important debates at the Constitutional Convention was over the issue of representation. The smaller states wanted each state to have an equal voice in the new government, while the larger states wanted representation to be based on population. This debate was resolved with the Great Compromise, which created a bicameral legislature. The Senate would be composed of two senators from each state, regardless of its size. The House of Representatives would be composed of members elected from each state in proportion to its population.

The Three-Fifths Compromise

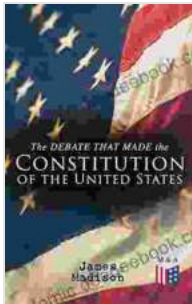
Another important debate at the Constitutional Convention was over the issue of slavery. The Southern states wanted slaves to be counted as full citizens for the purpose of representation, while the Northern states wanted them to be counted as three-fifths of a person. This debate was resolved with the Three-Fifths Compromise, which counted slaves as three-fifths of a person for the purpose of representation and taxation.

The Ratification of the Constitution

The new Constitution was submitted to the states for ratification in September 1787. It was ratified by the required nine states by June 1788, and it went into effect on March 4, 1789.

The Legacy of the Constitutional Convention

The Constitutional Convention was a remarkable achievement. The delegates were able to overcome their differences and create a new constitution that has served the United States well for over two centuries. The Constitution has been amended 27 times since it was ratified, but its basic structure remains the same. It is a testament to the wisdom of the Founding Fathers that the Constitution has been able to adapt to the changing needs of the country over time.



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