

Republicanism, State Constitutions, and the Articles of Confederation, 1776-1787

I. After the Revolutionary War, the U.S. still faced many problems

II. State Constitutions

III. The Articles of Confederation

IV. The Critical Period Under the Articles of Confederation (1781-1787)

V. Weaknesses of the Articles of Confederation

VI. Annapolis Convention (11-14 Sept. 1786)

VII. Shays' Rebellion, 1787



Republicanism, State Constitutions, and the Articles of Confederation, 1776-1787

- I. After the Revolutionary War, the U.S. still faced many problems
 - A. Frontier Indians; Settlement of West; Reconciling power & liberty
 - B. Critical Issue: Meaning of “Republican” Government

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II. State Constitutions

- A. By 1777, 11 of 13 colonies had adopted new written state constitutions**
- B. Constitutions provided for 3 branches of government: checks & balances**
- C. Constitutions approved by conventions elected directly by the people**
- D. Conventions sought to limit the power of the Governors**
- E. Adoption of Bills of Rights -- substantive and procedural rights**

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III. The Articles of Confederation

- A. Relatively easy for colonists to make new state governments
- B. However, no good outline for constructing a new central government
- C. Second Continental Congress was first national government
- D. 12 June 1776: Committee appointed to develop a new national government
- E. Articles of Confederation (1777 endorsed by SCC; 1781 went into effect)
- F. AOC: A perpetual league of friendship among otherwise sovereign states
- G. AOC: Unicameral Legislature; Each State = 1 vote; Enumerated Powers

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IV. The Critical Period Under the Articles of Confederation (1781-1787)

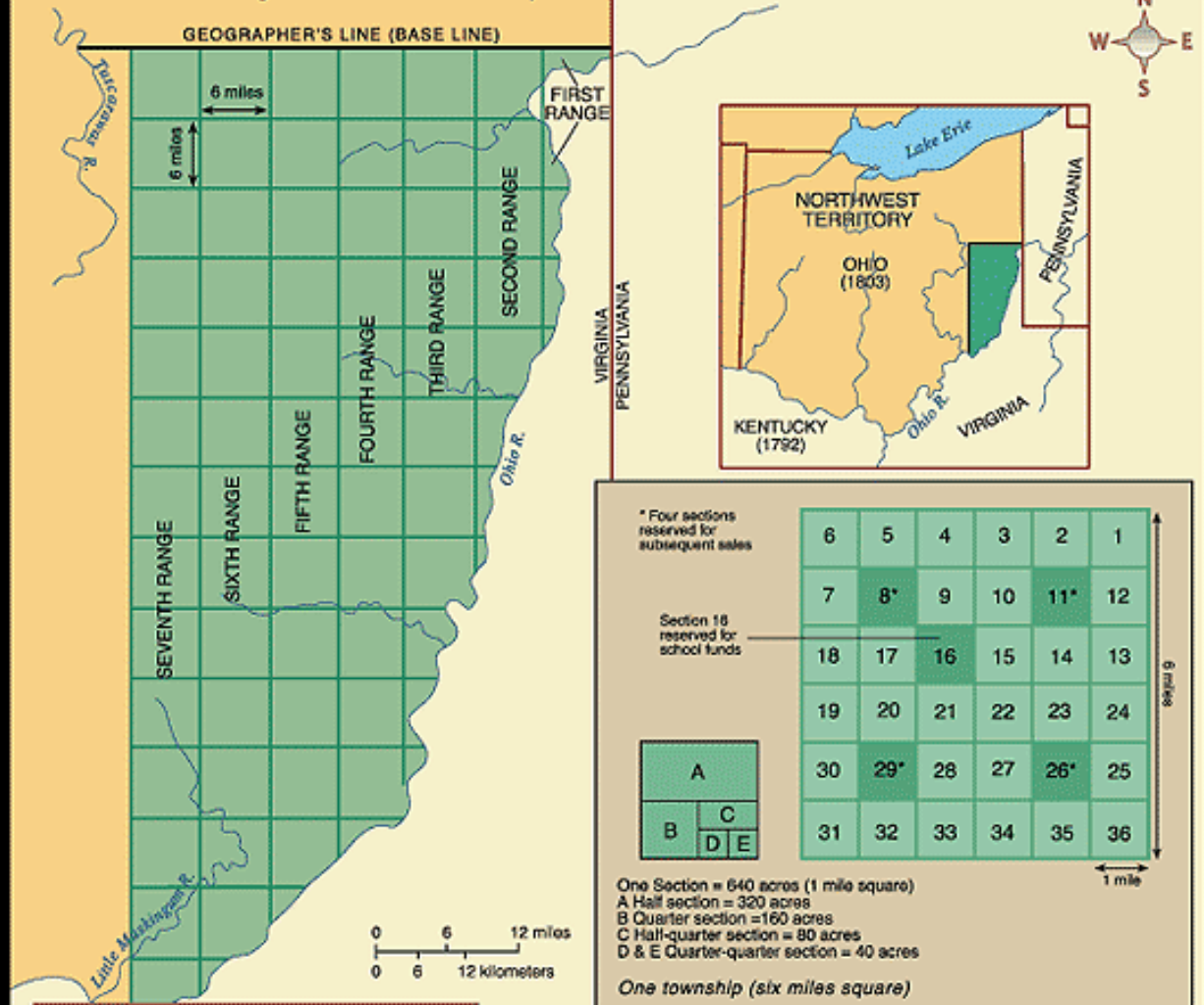
A. Land Ordinance of 1785

B. Northwest Ordinance of 1787 (13 July 1787)



State Claims to Western Lands, 1791

The Seven Ranges—first area surveyed



Land Ordinance of 1785



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V. Weaknesses of the Articles of Confederation

A. No Executive or Judicial Branch

B. No Power to Enforce Taxation

C. Little Power to Regulate Interstate Trade

D. 9 states of 13 needed to pass a law

E. 13 states of 13 need to amend AOC

VI. Annapolis Convention (11-14 Sept. 1786)



Daniel Shays, left, and Job Shattuck, shown in this engraving from *Bickerstaff's Boston Almanack* for 1787, led debt-ridden farmers against the Massachusetts state government. (National Portrait Gallery, Smithsonian)

What event in Massachusetts during 1786-87 led to the Constitutional Convention, and why?

Inflation and Depreciation of the Continental Currency

YEAR	# OF ISSUES	AMOUNT ISSUED	PAPER TO SPECIE
1775	3	\$6.0 million	90% (December)
1776	4	\$19 million	66% (Dec.) -- 1.5 to 1.0
1777	5	\$13 million	33% (October) -- 3.0 to 1.0
1778	14	\$63.5 million	15% (Dec.) -- 6.8 to 1.0
1779	14	\$140 million	2% (Dec.) -- 42 to 1.0
1780	0	-----	1% (Dec.) -- 99 to 1.0
1781	---	-----	.05% (April) -- 146 to 1.0
TOTAL ▶	40	\$241 million	