World History Notes

2/2/2024

* The Articles of Confederation proved to be a failure. They left the central government too weak to resolve nationwide economic problems or maintain order.
* A number of leaders called for a convention to fix the Articles. The Constitutional Convention met in Philadelphia in May 1787.
* Drawing from the premise of social contracts, the delegates were determined to create a government that would protect citizens without encroaching upon their rights and liberties.
* Not all citizens had the same ideas about their rights, however.
* One major concern was competition between large and small states. The large states wanted representation in Congress to be based on population.
* The small states wanted each state to have an equal number of representatives both in the House of Representatives and the Senate.
* This led to the Great Compromise. A state’s representation in the House would be based on its population, while all states had an equal number of representatives in the Senate.
* A related issue involved the counting of slaves in determining a state’s population, and thus representation in the House.
* Southern states wanted each slave to be counted. Northern states objected. The compromise was to count each slave as three-fifths of a person. A shameful part of American history.
* The states ratified the Constitution in 1788. Three years later, they approved a Bill of Rights, inspired by documents such as the English Bill of Rights.
* [Bill of Rights](https://youtu.be/yYEfLm5dLMQ)
* **Revolutions in France**
* Like the American Revolution, the French Revolution was inspired by Enlightenment philosophers and a dedication to the ideals of liberty and equality.
* Extremely high taxes, national debt, and a mostly apathetic monarch pushed the French working class and peasantry to demand changes.
* When these demands were not met, radicals chose instead to dissolve the government and form an entirely new one.
* The French Revolution was a radical assault on France’s traditional institutions—the monarchy, the Church, feudalism—and thoroughly transformed French society.