Setting the Stage  James Madison wrote 29 essays in *The Federalist* papers to argue in favor of ratifying the Constitution. In *The Federalist “Number 51,”* Madison explains how the government set up by the Constitution will protect the rights of the people by weakening the power of any interest, or group, to dominate the government. [See Primary Source Explorer](#)  

It is of great importance in a republic not only to guard the society against the oppression of its rulers, but to guard one part of the society against the injustice of the other part. Different interests necessarily exist in different classes of citizens. If a majority be united by a common interest, the rights of the minority will be insecure. There are but two methods of providing against this evil: the one by creating a will in the community independent of the majority—that is, of the society itself; the other, by *comprehending* in the society so many separate descriptions of citizens as will render an unjust combination of a majority of the whole very improbable, if not *impracticable*.  

Whilst all authority in it will be derived from and dependent on the society, the society itself will be broken into so many parts, interests and classes of citizens, that the rights of individuals, or of the minority, will be in little danger from interested combinations of the majority. In a free government the security for civil rights must be the same as that for religious rights. It consists in the one case in the multiplicity of interests, and in the other in the *multiplicity of sects*.  

In the extended republic of the United States, and among the great variety of interests, parties, and sects which it embraces, a *coalition* of a majority of the whole society could seldom take place on any other principles than those of justice and the general good. . . .  

It is no less certain than it is important . . . that the larger the society, provided it lie within a practicable sphere, the more duly capable it will be of self-government. And happily for the republican cause, the practicable sphere may be carried to a very great extent by a *judicious modification* and mixture of the *federal principle*.  

—James Madison

1. *comprehending*: understanding.  
2. *impracticable*: not practical or realistic.  
3. *whilst*: while.  
4. *multiplicity of sects*: large number of groups.  
5. *coalition*: alliance of groups.  
Objections to the Constitution

Setting the Stage  George Mason was one of the leading Antifederalists. In “Objections to the Constitution of Government Formed by the Convention,” he listed his reasons for opposing ratification. Above all, he feared that the Constitution created a government that would destroy democracy in the young nation. See Primary Source Explorer

There is no Declaration of Rights; and the Laws of the general Government being paramount to the Laws and Constitutions of the several States, the Declaration of Rights in the separate States are no Security. Nor are the people secured even in the Enjoyment of the Benefits of the common-Law. . . .

In the House of Representatives, there is not the Substance, but the Shadow only of Representation; which can never produce proper Information in the Legislature, or inspire Confidence in the People; the Laws will therefore be generally made by Men little concern'd in, and unacquainted with their Effects and Consequences.

The Senate have the Power of altering all Money-Bills, and of originating Appropriations of Money and the salaries of the Officers of their own Appointment in conjunction with the President of the United States; altho' they are not the Representatives of the People, or amenable to them. . . .

The President of the United States has the unrestrained Power of granting Pardon for Treason; which may be sometimes exercised to screen from Punishment those whom he had secretly instigated to commit the Crime, and thereby prevent a Discovery of his own Guilt.

This Government will commence in a moderate Aristocracy; it is at present impossible to foresee whether it will, in [its] Operation, produce a Monarchy, or a corrupt oppressive Aristocracy; it will most probably vibrate some Years between the two, and then terminate in the one or the other.

—George Mason

1. paramount: most important.
2. unacquainted: unfamiliar.
3. salaries: salaries.
4. conjunction: joining.
5. amenable: agreeable.
6. instigated: caused.
7. commence: begin.
8. aristocracy: rule by a few, usually nobles.
9. monarchy: rule by one, usually a king.

Interactive Primary Sources Assessment

1. Main Ideas
   a. Why does Madison believe that a society broken into many parts will not endanger minority rights? (REP5)
   b. What does Mason argue might happen if the president had the power to pardon people? (REP5)
   c. For each writer, what is one example of a fact and one example of an opinion? (REP5)

2. Critical Thinking
   Drawing Conclusions  Who do you think makes the stronger argument? Explain your reasons. (REP4)

   Think About
   • what you know about the history of the United States
   • the evidence used by each writer
CRITICAL THINKING

1. USING YOUR NOTES: SOLVING PROBLEMS

Using your completed chart, answer the questions below. (HI2)

a. What were the major problems facing the nation during the Confederation Era?

b. How well did the nation solve these problems? Explain.

2. ANALYZING LEADERSHIP

Think about the leaders discussed in this chapter. Based on their actions, which leader do you think made the greatest contribution to the Constitutional Convention? Why? (HI1)

3. THEME: DEMOCRATIC IDEALS

How do the Articles of Confederation and the Constitution each carry out democratic ideals? (REP4)

4. APPLYING CITIZENSHIP SKILLS

Do you think the Founders were right to make the compromises they did in the Constitution on the issues of representation and slavery? What might have happened if they had not compromised? (HI4)

5. RECOGNIZING EFFECTS

How might U.S. history be different if Virginia had refused to ratify the Constitution? If New York had refused? If both had refused? (HI4)

How did your ideas about how you would form a government change after reading this chapter?
Use the map and your knowledge of U.S. history to answer questions 1 and 2.

**1.** In which two states did the Federalists have statewide majorities? (8.2.4)
A. Delaware and New Jersey
B. Delaware and New York
C. New Jersey and Pennsylvania
D. New York and Pennsylvania

**2.** Which of the following is true? (8.2.4)
A. Most of New York supported the Federalists.
B. Most of Pennsylvania supported the Antifederalists.
C. Philadelphia supported the Federalists.
D. New Jersey supported both positions equally.

This quotation from John Dickinson describes his view of the Virginia Plan. Use the quotation and your knowledge of U.S. history to answer question 3.

**PRIMARY SOURCE**

Some of the members from the small states wish for two branches in the general legislature and are friends to a good [strong] national government; but we would sooner submit [give in] to a foreign power than submit to be deprived, in both branches of the legislature, of an equal suffrage [vote], and thereby be thrown under the domination of the larger states.

John Dickinson, quoted in *Mr. Madison’s Constitution*

**3.** Which statement best summarizes his concern? (8.2.3)
A. Large states should have more votes.
B. Small states should have more votes.
C. All states should have equal votes.
D. The states should not have any votes.