
Constitution as a Guard against Tyranny Example

'The very heart and soul of this country' is what the American philosopher, Mortimer Adler, noted the constitution as. It is very uncommon occurrence to see a single document have such prestige and impact on a society for over two centuries. Nevertheless, the United States Constitution has done exactly that. The Framers were visionaries, who created the Constitution to withstand all adversity. To do this they made sure that the Constitution not only addressed the controversies of their time but would also have the ability to address the affairs of those in the future. The fundamental laws laid out in the Constitution secured our basic human rights. Moreover, these laws paved the way for all laws that followed and ensured that each law to come would be honorable and just. Our Founding Fathers made sure that our individual freedom was protected along with the essential principles listed in the Constitution. By doing this, the Framers put the power of the government in the citizen's hands because they intended to make 'a government of the people, by the people, for the people' as Abraham Lincoln declares in his Gettysburg Address. Republicanism is a principle in our Constitution that dictates that the power is ultimately held by the people; in that, the people designate power to elected leaders, who, in turn, represent them. From 1787 until today the Constitution has served as the instrument of government, where some have complete faith in it and others do not. We have honored it, we have criticized it, but we, as American citizens, live with the Constitution every day.

The elected leaders who make up our government are held accountable for accommodating all citizens not just some. By doing this the Framers decided that The United States of America would have a republic government, they believed this form of government would be the most advantageous. The preamble to the Constitution articulates that it will 'promote the general welfare.' Meaning, no one person nor group would be superior or preferred to another, hence why American citizens coexist equally today. The very act of forming a republic goes to show that the Founding Fathers of the Constitution did their very best to hone civic virtue. When the republic was beginning to grow the Electoral College was implemented. There were two main purposes as to why they deemed this method fit. These reasons were, to place an intermediary between the election of the President and the general public, and to ensure that the power among the states would be distributed evenly in regards to population. At this time most of the country were uneducated and feared that citizens could be easily manipulated by a tyrant in a direct election to the Presidency.

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Around the same time that the Constitution was ratified, Alexander Hamilton, one of the Founding Fathers, wrote the 68th Federalist Paper, in which he spells out the role of the Electoral College, 'It was equally desirable, that the immediate election should be made by men most capable of analyzing the qualities adapted to the station, and acting under circumstances favorable to deliberation...' He goes on to discuss the process in which the Electoral College members would be selected and what their duties would be. The committee would be made up of, 'A small number of persons, selected by their fellow-citizens from the general mass, will be most likely to possess the information and discernment requisite to such complicated investigations,' and 'It was also peculiarly desirable to afford as little opportunity as possible to tumult and disorder.' Hamilton believed that enforcing the Electoral College will be an opulent solution towards evading the risk of tyranny. Likewise to avoiding an autocratic government, he thought that this system would 'promise an effectual security against this mischief.' With this information, one can see that the Framers believed that the Electoral College would have a lasting effect on the ever changing American society.

Although the Founding Fathers had high hopes for the Electoral College system within our voting process, the Electoral College has always been seen as a contravene of the Constitution by some. The constitutional amendments that promise equivalent protection of the law are being forthrightly disregarded by the Electoral College, and therefore should be considered unconstitutional. It is spelled out in Article II of the Constitution that the number of electors states receives depends on the amount of representatives and senators that the state has. Every state has only two senators, and because of this arrangement, the smaller states in the country cannot coexist equally with the larger states. These less populated states have a disproportionate influence on the election of their presidents based on their population. Disproportionality is embedded into our voting system. 'Today, six states and DC get at least two times more electoral votes than they would under an equal-population system.' The issue in recent years is that in previous presidential elections the Electoral College chooses a president that lost the popular vote, unfairly representing the people. A prime example of this is our 2016 presidential election, where Hillary Clinton had almost a 3 million vote margin over her fellow candidate, Donald Trump. Although receiving more popular votes, Clinton ended up losing to Trump because he received 304 out of the 538 total electoral votes, which won him the election. Our current president has even agreed in the dislike of the Electoral College. Donald Trump tweeted, 'the electoral college is a disaster for a democracy', and he couldn't be more correct. The Electoral College was something spurred by a fear of democracy and the people. The voting system is one that outrages many citizens because they believe that the Electoral College is ill-fitting of the republic and contradicts their rights laid out in the Constitution. These claims hold significant truth and action is needed to ensure that the citizens of America are well represented in a undoubtedly crucial election.

While the voting system in our country is one that should be altered, we would not even raise the concern if it weren't for my study of the Constitution. Mortimer Adler believed that in order to be an

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active citizen of the country you must understand the Constitution. In agreeance with Adler, I believe that it is our civic duty to study the Constitution. How else would we be able to ask questions and amend it? If you are not well-versed you cannot effect change, and you cannot stop it. This is the only way in our ever-shifting society to ensure that constitutional ideals are carried out. Each generation must continue to strive to do better than the last. Whether that be by amending the Constitution or by finding better ways of enforcing democracy, it will only improve the quality of life for the common welfare but it will also inspire the coming generations to do more justice. After studying the Constitution, I believe that we, as the people that make up the government, have a moral obligation of continuing to read and praise the document and our Founding Fathers. Not only that, but I feel as though we have to critique it too, because there is always going to be some way to advance our government and ourselves and this is the only way to do so. By being active citizens in this manner we will only maintain an adherence to the Constitution and extend the possibilities for the entire country.

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