Yunpeng Ling

Professor Christine Schultz

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The Constitution of 1787

The original constitution was written by the creditor class to protect their self-interest and properties. The constitution of 1787 created a strong national government that able to protect the creditor class and insulate the poor from the government. The system guaranteed the great freedom of trade and stabilized the society after the independent war. The 11 years before constitution, the reprehensive of the fifty-five men who wrote the constitution, the indirect selection and the design of government branches show that the constitution was designed by the elite-the creditor class to protect the wealth and property.

The eleven years before the constitution have greatly impacted the creditor class across the original 13 states. There is no one united currency exists, the money in one state not only have an unstable rate but also can’t be used in another state which lead to the deteriorate of the economic. Without the growth of economy, the poor couldn’t pay back their debt and formed rebellions to against the creditor class and the government who intended to collect the lend money. As the result of the deteriorate economy and the threaten of growing rebellions, the creditor class began to sense the need of create a strong national government that capable of protecting property.

The fifty-five white men who wrote the original constitution were the elites of the elites. They come from 12 of the 13 states and represent interest of the white men who owns property in their home state. At least forty of the fifty-five men hold revolutionary stocks or bands, fourteen were land speculators, twenty-four were money lenders and investors, elven were engaged in commerce or manufacturing, fifteen owned large plantations.

The indirect selection of national government official suggests that the form of government is a government elite protect the wealth because three of the four national institutions are not elected by the people, which really means the poor. The president of the united states server as chief executive but he is indirectly selected by the electoral college. The electoral college punishes the third party, reward the two major parties and strengthens the institution of the presidency. Since the objective of the government is to protect the property, the authors believe that individuals who owned property should govern and the masses should have very limited role in the selection of their governors. The selection process virtually excludes the poor from directly participating. The House of Representatives were the only constitutional officer to be elected by the people.

The Constitution staggers elections to prevent the poor from influence government decisions. The house member serves two years. The president serves a four-year term. Senator serve for six years but only one third of the seats are elected in any election year. The 100 seats in the senate are divided into thirds and two senators from the same state are not allowed in the same third. Such a design of elections makes voters can never get control of the house, senate or presidency, it would be very hard for the people to influence the law-making process or pass a bill since all those actions require the agreement of most house members or the senators.

The single member plurality elections for the house let each district choose one house member based on plurality not necessary a majority vote, the house therefore, represents the biggest interest in each of the 435 districts. The election discourages third parties and encourage the two moderate, more centrist parties.

Staggered elections lead the separation of powers, the constitution therefore prevent the poor to overthrow the government or gain full control in any of the three institutions. None of the three institutions can make all the decisions by itself, the design of balance and check furthermore reduced the possibility of the people’s influence on the government elite and wealth.

Federalism is a unique invention of America. The author of the constitution wanted to devise a national government that was much more powerful than that under the article of confederation. The federalism defined in the constitution give the new national government strong power to put the nation’s interest over the states’ interest which represent the people’s will. The article I, section 8 lists the explicit powers of the national congress. These powers primarily have to do with creating a stable monetary system and protecting private property. Section 8 ends by saying that the national congress can also do anything “necessary and proper “to doing any of the things listed above in Article I, section 8. This is called the elastic clause because it allows congress to greatly enlarge the powers of the national government.

The super majority further made it is hard for the poor from govern the State thus protected the interests and property of the government elite and the wealth. The branches of the government are designed to not work together but to pass a law, they have to work together which means the majority of them make an agreement.

The 1789 constitution made many compromises on slavery among the northern and southern states. “The compromise made among the states over slavery were done at the expense of the freedom the African Americans”(Reader Page 221).The economic argument, the protection of property rights, took precedence over the slavery issues. The economy of southern states was heavily relied on the slavery. Thus, the framers of the Constitution never considered the abolish of slavery as real issue. The sanctity of the union was more important to the creditor class who wrote the Constitution than the abolish of slavery.

The property qualifications took the vote away from white man who don’t own property. As Alexis de Tocqueville states, “In no other country in the world is the love of property keener or more alert than in the United States and nowhere else does the majority display less inclination toward doctrines which in any way threaten the way property is owned.” (Text Page 461). The poor white men are insulated from the government decisions and couldn’t do much influence on the ruler class. The property qualifications closed the door for the poor to change the society but give the privilege of vote to the government elite and wealth to make changes according their interests.

The Bill of Rights continue emphasis the protection of the property and the fact that the Bill of Rights comes after the Constitution and only after the states demanded it, suggest that the priority of the framers was the actual Constitution itself.

The fifty-five authors of the original Constitution created a society with great economy freedom. The white men who owns property are the biggest benefiters of this freedom. The powerful national government united the currency system and the regulation of the trade between the states and the national government have the right to decide whether the state’s commercial law violate the Constitution or not. From this point, the national government guaranteed the great freedom of economy and regulated the interstate business.

The Constitution did not create equality system for everyone in that society, the focus of the people who wrote the Constitution was to restore the economy and create a stable society where the personal property gets protected by the law. The white men, women and slaves who don’t have property did not have the same right as the creditor class, they don’t have the right to vote and other rights are also not guaranteed by the Constitution as much as the creditor class. Counting each slave as three-fifths of a person for representation and taxation purpose explicitly established a racial hierarchy where one group of people is intrinsically worth more than another.

The Constitution created a stable society and trade environment with orders. As one of the authors of the original Constitution James Madison said, “Every word of the Constitution decides a question between power and Liberty” (Text Page 64). “where the standing army is at hand to punish offenders, every man is actuated by the latter principle and therefore, when the magistrate calls, will obey…”(Kollman Page 58). The creditor class from 12 of 13 states created a powerful national government that able to use economy or military force to maintain the order of the nation. The neighbor states were guided by the law of national government to keep peace in all aspect and the rebellions were no longer able to stand against the creditor class, the new powerful national government.

Reference

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