

Background Reading

After the Constitutional Convention of 1787 ended, the proposed Constitution was submitted to the American people for approval. Public debates began between those who supported the Constitution (**Federalists**) and those who opposed it (**Anti-Federalists**). One issue in the debate was whether it would be possible to unite the thirteen states under one federal government, in such a way that the powers of the individual states and their respective governments would not be eliminated. The Anti-Federalists generally agreed that the project of consolidating into one country should be rejected. They worried that such a large republic would never truly be united unless it was ruled by a tyrant. Federalists argued that the nation needed a strong government to stop the fighting between the states. They believed that the powers of the government were limited and controlled through a system of checks and balances.