

OUR ENGLISH POLITICAL HERITAGE



English Concepts of Gov.

⦿ Ordered Government

- English colonists saw the need for having a government

⦿ Limited Government

- Government is not all powerful and certain individual rights cannot be taken away

⦿ Representative Government

- Government should serve the will of the people

Magna Carta, AD 1215

- ⦿ Nobles forced King John to sign the Magna Carta
- ⦿ Rights included:
 - Trial by jury
 - Due process of law
- ⦿ The Magna Carta placed Kings subject to the rule of law

Original 1215 Magna Carta



Petition of Right, AD 1628

- Parliament refused to give King Charles I more money through taxes unless he signed the Petition of Right, limiting his power
- King could no longer punish or imprison except if a person had been judged by his peers
- King could not make citizens house soldiers

English Bill of Rights, AD 1689

- ◎ Parliament forced William and Mary to sign the Bill of Rights
 - Prohibited a standing army in peacetime
 - Required that parliamentary elections be free
 - Right to a fair trial
 - Freedom from cruel and unusual punishment

English Bill of Rights

of Speech and Debates or Proceedings in Parliament
ought not to be impeached or questioned in any
Court or Place out of Parliament That Petition
Oraunt ought not to be required nor excessive
Fines imposed nor cruel and unusual Punishments
inflicted That no man ought to be doubly impeached
and retried and no man ought to paye upon men in
Exalls for their Exalls ought to be freeholders
That all Traites and Forfeitures of fines and
Forfeitures of particular persons whose Condemns
are illegal and void And that for Redress of
all Grievances and for the amending the strengthening
and preserving of the Lawes Parliaments ought to
be held frequently And they doe claime Demand
and wish upon all and singular the premises
as their undoubted Rights and Liberties And
that not Declarations Judgements Doings or
Proceedings to the prejudice of the People in any
of the said premises ought in any wise to be
drawn hereafter into Consequence or Example
To which Demand of their Rights they are
particularly encouraged by the Declaration of
the Rights the Points of Oraunt as being
the only wayes for obtaining a full Redress
and Remedy therein Having therefore an entire
Confidence that the said Signall the Points
of Oraunt will beget the Deliberate see
favre advaunt of him and will still preserve
them from the violation of their Rights
which they have been asserted and from all
other Obstructions upon their Religion Liberty
and Liberties The said Lordes Spiritual and Temporall
and Commons assembled at Westminster doe
Resolve That William and Mary their and
Heirs of Oraunt be and be declared King and
Queen of England France and Ireland and the
Dominions therunto belonging To hold the
Crown and Royall dignity of the said Kingdomes
and Dominions to them the said Points and
Princesses during their lives and the life of
the Survivor of them And that the sole and
full Exercise of the Regall Power be only in
and exercised by the said Points of Oraunt
in the names of the said Points and Princesses

Type of Colonies

⦿ Royal Colonies

- Subject to the direct control of the King

⦿ Proprietary Colonies

- Governed by a proprietor appointed by the King

⦿ Charter Colonies

- Rhode Island and Connecticut
- Largely self-governing

From Colonies to Independence

- Until 1760s, the colonies were left largely to govern themselves
- King George, III took a more active and forceful approach to the colonies, imposing taxes and stationing soldiers in the colonies

Organization

- ◎ Stamp Act Congress 1765
 - Protested new taxes and sent a list of complaints to the King
- ◎ First Continental Congress 1774
 - Protested the Intolerable Acts and sent a Declaration of Rights to the King
- ◎ Second Continental Congress 1775
 - Became the de facto colonial government

Biblical Basis

Romans 13 (NIV)

1 Let everyone be subject to the governing authorities, for there is no authority except that which God has established. The authorities that exist have been established by God.

4 For the one in authority is God's servant for your good. But if you do wrong, be afraid, for rulers do not bear the sword for no reason. They are God's servants, agents of wrath to bring punishment on the wrongdoer. 5 Therefore, it is necessary to submit to the authorities, not only because of possible punishment but also as a matter of conscience.

