

Foundations of American Government

Unit One

Chapter One

"People and Government"

3 Basic Powers of Government

- ❑ **1) legislative** – the power to make law/public policy
 - ❑ **2) executive** – the power to execute, enforce, administer the law
 - ❑ **3) judicial** – the power to interpret laws
-

4 Elements of The State

- ❑ **1) population** – must have people/population (size does not matter.)
 - ❑ **2) territory** – must have land/territory with recognized boundaries (again size is irrelevant).
 - ❑ **3) sovereignty** – it has supreme and absolute power/authority within its own territory/boundaries (can decide foreign and domestic policy).
 - ❑ **4) government** – must have a gov. that creates and enforces public policy – also sets goals.
-

Theories of the Origin of the State (1-4)

- ❑ **The Force Theory** – people of an area were forced to come together under the authority of one person or small group (authoritarian, totalitarian, dictatorships, etc.)
 - ❑ **The Evolutionary Theory** – the state formed naturally or evolved from the family (or a network of families, tribes, etc) with a “head of state”, people, land, policies.
 - ❑ **The Divine Right Theory** – the idea that God or the gods have chosen certain individuals or families to rule. If you disobey those who rule you are “sinning” (Monarchies, Pharaohs, Emperors) .
-

Theories of the Origin of the State (1-4)

- **The Social Contract Theory** – people willingly enter into a contract and give up just as much power as needed to promote safety and welfare of society. Comes from **Thomas Hobbes** (people live in a state of nature with no gov. and life was nasty, brutal, and short. People need gov. for protection, order. Gov. exists to serve the will of the people. **Jean Jacques Rousseau** (limited gov) & **John Locke** (added the idea of unalienable rights – Dec. of Ind.)
-

Purpose of Government

- ❑ Outlined in the preamble of our constitution
 - ❑ 1) form a more perfect union – create a stronger gov.,
 - ❑ 2) establish justice – fair and impartial laws and enforcement,
 - ❑ 3) insure domestic tranquility – maintain order and peace domestically,
 - ❑ 4) provide for the common defense – protect from foreign enemies,
 - ❑ 5) promote the general welfare – provide services like education, public health standards,
 - ❑ 6) secure the blessings of liberty – protect individual rights and freedoms.
-

Government Systems

- ❑ **Unitary Government** – centralized gov., all power held by the national gov. at a single location – local govt's formed and only given power by central gov.
 - ❑ **Federal Government** – powers are divided between a central/national gov. and local/state govt's. There is a division of power by different levels of gov and geographically.
-

Forms of Government (1-3)

- **Autocracy** – rule by one. The “Force Theory” – military or police control. Oldest and most common form of gov. Usually a command economy, *sometimes* communist.

Totalitarian Dictatorship – one leader or a group of leaders controls all social and economic life. Gov. is not responsible to the people and the people cannot limit government.

Monarchy- Kings, Queens, or Emperors are the supreme power – usually inherited their positions. If **Absolute** = unlimited power.

Constitutional Monarchy – have a monarchy (sometimes just figure heads) that share power with elected officials.

Forms of Government

- ❑ **Oligarchy** – rule by a few/small group. Power/control usually comes from wealth, military strength. Usually claim to rule for the people but much more like autocracy than a democracy.
 - ❑ **Democracy** – Rule by the people/many. Rests on concepts of individual freedom, equality, free elections, competing political parties, majority rule with minority rights, and compromise. Usually free enterprise economies (capitalism or socialism).
 - Direct Democracy** – people vote directly on issues – no need for representation.
 - Representative Democracy** – people elect reps who will make decisions, policies, laws.
-

Communism	Socialism	Capitalism
<ul style="list-style-type: none">❑ Classless society❑ Shared ownership of the means of production.❑ No private property <p>Karl Marx – class system creates constant struggle, eliminate classes and eliminate the need for gov.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">❑ Property and the distribution of wealth are determined by the state.❑ State ownership of the means of production.❑ Some Communist States have ideas that fall in line with Socialism.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">❑ means of production are privately owned.❑ problems with monopoly or oligopoly.❑ Creates “winners and losers” <p>Adam Smith – greed is good, the invisible hand, <i>Laissez-faire</i>.</p>