

Time Traveler Scooter McGinty in ...

The CONSTITUTION *and the* BILL of RIGHTS

1783

THE TREATY OF
PARIS HAS BEEN
SIGNED! WE
WON THE
REVOLUTIONARY
WAR!

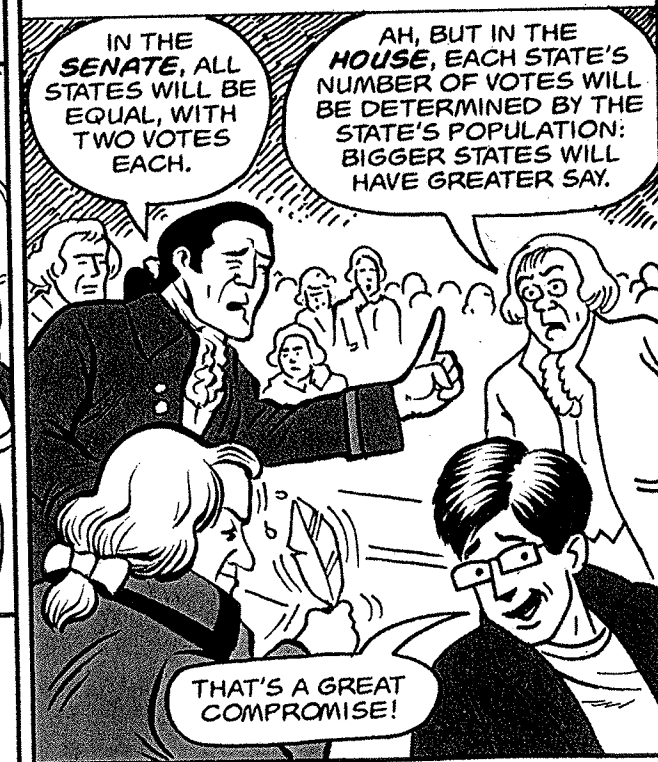
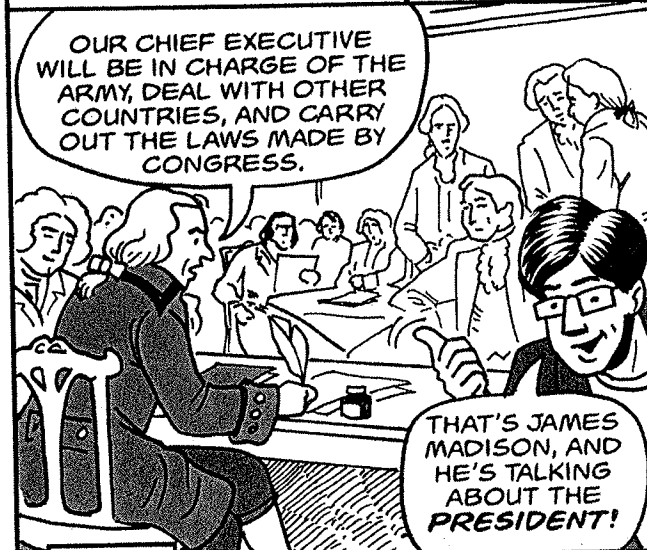
I HATE TO BREAK IT TO
YOU, BUT THE COLONIES ARE
BROKE, AND YOU HAVE NO REAL
SYSTEM OF GOVERNMENT TO
REPLACE THE KING!





THE DELEGATES DISCUSSED AND DEBATED HOW TO GOVERN THE NEW NATION. THEY DECIDED THAT A DIVISION OF POWER WOULD BE BEST. THERE WOULD BE THREE BRANCHES OF GOVERNMENT, AND NONE WOULD BE STRONGER THAN THE OTHERS. ONE WAS THE EXECUTIVE BRANCH.

ANOTHER WAS THE LEGISLATIVE BRANCH, OR CONGRESS, WHICH MADE THE LAWS. THE DELEGATES DECIDED TO SPLIT CONGRESS INTO TWO: THE SENATE AND THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES.



FACT BOX James Madison, who would be the fourth U.S. President, kept the most detailed notes during the convention. He is given credit for writing most of the Constitution.

THE THIRD WAS THE JUDICIAL BRANCH.

THE JUDGES ON THE SUPREME COURT WILL SETTLE CASES DEALING WITH LAWS MADE BY CONGRESS.

THERE'S ONLY ONE **M** IN SUPREME.



THE DEBATE BEGAN TO WIND DOWN.

PERHAPS THIS GOVERNMENT WE ARE CREATING HAS TOO MUCH POWER. I BELIEVE WE SHOULD ADD A **BILL OF RIGHTS** TO THE CONSTITUTION. THAT WILL PROTECT THE BASIC FREEDOMS OF OUR PEOPLE.

WE'VE BEEN HERE FOR FOUR LONG, HOT MONTHS. LET'S JUST SIGN THE THING ALREADY!



TOO BAD YOU GUYS DIDN'T INVENT AIR CONDITIONING!

AT LONG LAST, THE DELEGATES TO THE CONVENTION GATHERED TO SIGN THE CONSTITUTION.

HEY, BEN FRANKLIN, DOES THIS MEAN THE CONSTITUTION IS NOW OFFICIAL?

NO, FUTURE BOY! IN ORDER FOR THE CONSTITUTION TO BECOME LAW, 9 OF THE 13 STATES MUST APPROVE IT. SO WE STILL HAVE WORK TO DO!



SEPTEMBER 17, 1787

FACT BOX

Many of the delegates knew that the final document was not perfect, but as Ben Franklin put it, the government created by the Constitution was "so near to perfection."

TO WIN THE STATES' APPROVAL, TEN AMENDMENTS WERE FINALLY ADDED TO THE CONSTITUTION. MORE AMENDMENTS WOULD BE ADDED LATER IN AMERICAN HISTORY, BUT THE FIRST TEN WOULD ALWAYS BE CALLED THE "BILL OF RIGHTS."

HEAR YE! HEAR YE! THIS BILL OF RIGHTS GIVES YOU THE FREEDOM OF SPEECH, RELIGION, PRESS, TO ASSEMBLE PEACEFULLY, THE RIGHT TO BEAR ARMS, THE RIGHT TO A FAIR AND SPEEDY TRIAL BY JURY, FREEDOM FROM UNFAIR SEARCHES OF YOUR HOMES, THE RIGHT OF ALL STATES TO MAKE LAWS THAT HAVE NOT BEEN MADE BY CONGRESS--

NOW THAT THEY'VE ADDED THE BILL OF RIGHTS, I GIVE THE CONSTITUTION A THUMBS-UP! THE GOVERNMENT IS SHARING THE POWER WITH THE PEOPLE!



TO TEACH PEOPLE HOW IMPORTANT IT WAS FOR THEIR STATES TO APPROVE THE CONSTITUTION, JAMES MADISON, JOHN JAY, AND ALEXANDER HAMILTON PUBLISHED A SERIES OF ESSAYS CALLED "THE FEDERALIST PAPERS."

READ ALL ABOUT IT! A CENTRAL GOVERNMENT IS A GOOD GOVERNMENT!

THE GOVERNMENT HAS THE POWER--BUT SO DO THE PEOPLE!

WE ONLY NEED 9 STATES, BUT WE WANT EVERY STATE TO APPROVE THE CONSTITUTION!



THE CONSTITUTION WAS RATIFIED, WITH NINE STATES' APPROVAL, ON JUNE 21, 1788. (THE REMAINING FOUR STATES LATER RATIFIED IT.) LESS THAN A YEAR LATER, THE EXECUTIVE BRANCH HELD A SPECIAL CEREMONY...

APRIL 30, 1789
IN THE NATION'S ORIGINAL CAPITAL--
NEW YORK CITY!

FROM THIS DAY FORWARD, YOU WILL BE CALLED HIS HIGHNESS, THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES AND PROTECTOR OF THEIR LIBERTIES!



SCOOTER'S QUICK QUIZ

1. What was the name of the WEAK document used to govern the colonies during the Revolutionary War?
2. Who wrote much of the U.S. Constitution?
3. The three branches of government are often called a system of "checks and balances." What do you think this means? What is being checked, and what is balanced?
4. Dividing Congress into two houses was known as the Great Compromise. Research why the Convention delegates did this.
5. Look up the Bill of Rights and choose one amendment to explain to your classmates. What freedoms does it guarantee us?