

Articles of Confederation

A “first draft” Constitution

The Articles of Confederation

What we didn't like about the British...	So under the Articles of Confederation...
Taxation without representation	The federal government could not tax
A large central government that had absolute power	States didn't have to follow federal laws and treaties
Having to follow British legislation	States had their own laws and didn't have to follow other states' laws
Lots of power was in the king's hands	No executive branch or national court system
The king could change laws at any time	Any amendment required all 13 states' approval

What was the Problem?

- *Since there was no executive branch, the government could not defend its borders.*
- *Since there was no national court system, the government could not enforce its laws*
- *Since there were no taxes, Congress had to request funds from states to do anything, and when they did, they were often denied*
- *Any amendment required all 13 states' approval, so the Articles of Confederation were very difficult to modify*

The Northwest Ordinance...

The Articles of Confederation weren't ALL bad, of course!

They got the states to agree on one important issue: how to develop the western lands acquired in the Treaty of Paris

It outlined a 3-step process by which territories could become states.

1. Congress appoints, governor, secretary, and 3 judges for territory.
2. With 5,000 free males living there, the people elect a legislature and nonvoting delegates to Congress.
3. With 60,000 free male inhabitants, the territory could apply to become a state.

The Northwest Ordinance

It promised the Indians that their
“property shall never be taken...
without their consent.”

The Northwest Ordinance

And, outlawed slavery in the Northwest territories.

“There shall be neither slavery nor involuntary servitude in the... territory.”

The Northwest Territories eventually became:

- Ohio
- Michigan
- Indiana
- Illinois
- Wisconsin
- Part of Minnesota

(see map on page 252 of your textbook) ⁸