

U.S. Constitution inspired by Adams' state model

GOVERNMENT UNDER the U.S. Constitution began today. Politicians representing Massachusetts have played a major role in establishing the U.S. Constitution, *writes our civil rights correspondent, March 4, 1789.*

The U.S. Constitution forms the body of laws governing the newly independent United States of America. The document strengthens the national government, which is now made up of the legislative branch, consisting of the U.S. Congress; the executive branch, including the president; and the judicial branch, consisting of the Supreme Court and other federal courts.

It has been partly modeled on the Massachusetts Constitution, though it permits slavery.

Getting approval for the new Constitution was no small feat. Anti-federalists feared that the Constitution would over-centralize government and restrict individual liberties. They demanded changes and a Bill of Rights to guarantee personal freedoms. Federalists, on the other hand, argued that states should accept the proposed Constitution without further changes.

When these opposing views clashed in Massachusetts, an agreement—known as the Massachusetts Compromise—was brokered by two famous local statesmen, John Hancock and Samuel Adams. Under it, Massachusetts ratified the Constitution, becoming the sixth U.S. state, while also proposing future amendments, including a Bill of Rights. The Massachusetts Compromise was used as a model by other states to reach similar agreements. Without it, the U.S. Constitution may never have been ratified at all.

The U.S. Constitution will be formally enacted next month alongside George Washington's inauguration as the first U.S. President.

