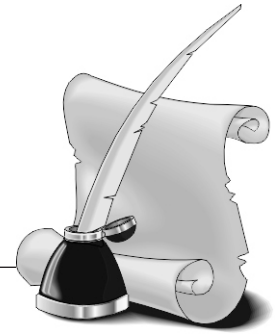


Tools for Learning History

Section 1.7 Living Document



Pre-View 1.7

- **Living document** – a description of the Constitution that describes how it can be altered to meet the current needs of our changing society
- **Formal amendment** – a change or an addition to the actual language of the Constitution
- **Informal amendment** – a law, an executive action, or a court ruling that changes how the Constitution is interpreted or applied but does not change the actual language of the Constitution
- **Bill of Rights** – the first ten amendments to the Constitution that outline basic rights under the Constitution
- **Constitutional convention** – a gathering of elected delegates to amend the Constitution
- **18th Amendment** – Constitutional amendment that established Prohibition
- **21st Amendment** – Constitutional amendment that repealed Prohibition
- **Judicial review** – the right of the Supreme Court to determine if laws and executive actions are constitutional

The Constitution

A Living Document

The Constitution as a “living document” can be a complicated and controversial issue — one that we do not choose to fully explore here. One thing is certain — the Constitution can be changed by legislation and it can be interpreted by the Supreme Court. A simple definition of **living document** is the ability to change or interpret a document such as the Constitution to meet current needs.

Amendments to the Constitution

Because the authors of the Constitution could not put into writing every situation that might occur in a dynamic (changing) society, they penned the basic framework and included a way to change it later should need arise. There are two kinds of changes. A **formal amendment** is a change in the actual language of the Constitution while an **informal amendment** changes the way the Constitution is interpreted or applied.

Formal Amendments

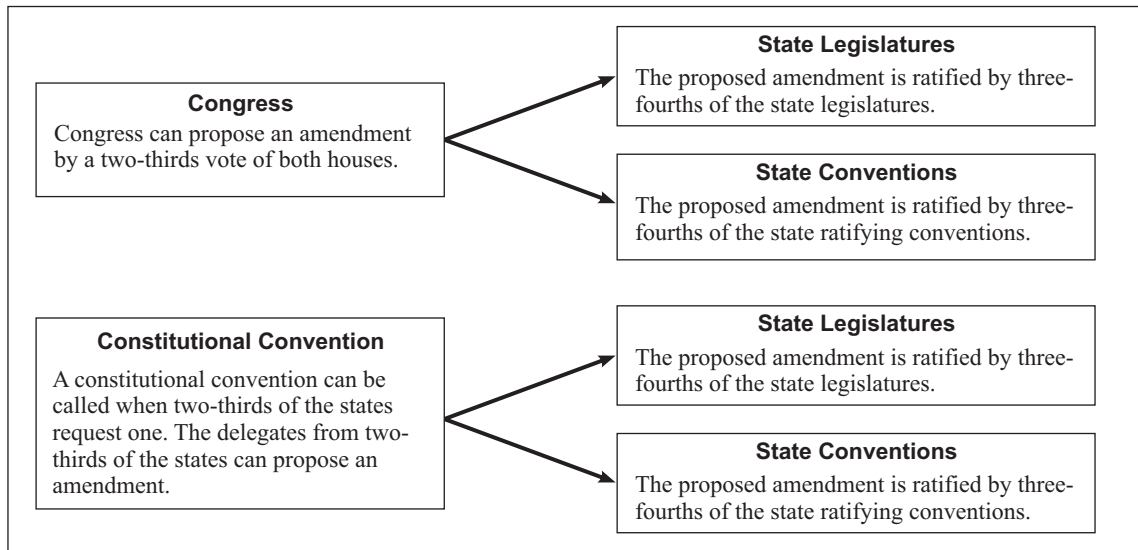
The **Bill of Rights** is the first ten amendments to the Constitution, and they add detail to the basic structure. These are formal amendments that spell out some of our basic rights under the Constitution. There have been 17 additional amendments to the Constitution. These deal with varied issues such as rights for African Americans, the order of presidential succession, prohibition (outlawing alcohol) and its repeal, and the right for women and eighteen-year-olds to vote.

In general, Congress proposes formal amendments, but states must ratify (approve) them before they become part of the Constitution. Amendments can be proposed in two different ways and ratified by two different methods. Congress can propose an amendment by a two-thirds vote of both houses, or Congress can call a constitutional convention when two-thirds of the states ask for one. A **constitutional convention** is a gathering of delegates (ordinary citizens) selected by popular vote from each state for the purpose of amending the Constitution.

Ratification of an amendment can take place by the acceptance of three-fourths of the state legislatures or by the acceptance of three-fourths of state ratifying conventions. Similar to a constitutional convention, a state ratifying convention is normally made up of delegates separate from the state legislator.

Section 1.7, continued
Living Document

Formal Amendments



18th and 21st Amendments

The **18th Amendment** established Prohibition, a law that made it illegal to manufacture, transport, or sell alcoholic beverages. After 14 years of very little success at enforcing the law, the 18th Amendment was repealed by the **21st Amendment**. This is the only time in U.S. history that one amendment repealed another. The 21st Amendment is also the only time that an amendment has been ratified by state conventions. Perhaps the supporters wanted to remove as much political pressure from the process as they could.

Failed Amendment

Not all the amendments that are proposed become part of the Constitution. One notable example was the Equal Rights Amendment (ERA) of the 1970s and 1980s. Congress passed the proposal to outlaw discrimination against women by the required two-thirds majority and sent it to the states. Some states ratified it quickly, but at the end of the time limit, it did not have the necessary three-fourths majority. Even after the time period for ratification had been extended, the proposal fell three states short of ratification.

Informal Amendments

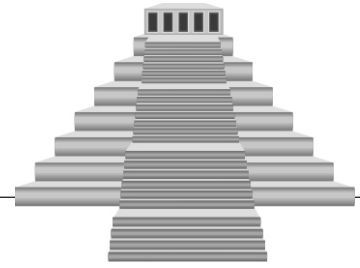
Informal amendments don't actually change the language of the Constitution but are more like changes in the way that the Constitution is interpreted or applied. These changes can come in a number of ways including congressional legislation, presidential action, Supreme Court decisions, and precedent. Check the table below for examples.

Informal Changes

GOVERNMENT ACTION	EXAMPLES
Congress	Congress has passed legislation to create governmental agencies such as the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) and the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)
The President	Presidents can take executive actions. By executive order, Truman desegregated the military. Other Presidents have committed troops to war, such as in the invasion of Iraq.
Precedent	A President's serving only two terms was a precedent (an example) set by George Washington. The two-term limit was made a formal change by the 22nd Amendment.

The Age of Imperialism

Section 6.7 Latin America



Pre-View 6.7

- **Latin America** – generally, the countries south of the United States (Mexico, Central and South America, and the Caribbean) where Spanish, Portuguese, or French is spoken
- **Monroe Doctrine of 1823** – U.S. policy that warned Europe not to try to extend their influence in the Western Hemisphere
- **Big Stick policy** – Roosevelt’s foreign policy that used force if necessary to get nations to do what the United States wanted
- **Roosevelt Corollary** – 1901 expansion of the Monroe Doctrine that extended U.S. influence to be a policeman to Latin American countries to protect them from European aggression or internal unrest
- **Dollar Diplomacy** – Taft’s foreign policy that encouraged U.S. business investment in countries to stabilize them instead of using force
- **Moral or Missionary Diplomacy** – the attempt by Wilson to reward countries who did what we wanted and punish those who didn’t
- **Isthmus** – narrow strip of land between two continents
- **Panama Canal** – canal built across Panama and controlled by the United States
- **ABC Powers** – a term designated the powerful nations of Argentina, Brazil, and Chile in South America

Throughout the 1890s and into the 20th century, U.S. Presidents took a more aggressive posture with regard to foreign policy, especially with those countries to our south. **Latin America** is the group of nations that include Mexico, most of Central and South America, and some of the Caribbean who speak primarily Spanish, Portuguese, or French. As the United States began to lean toward imperialism, American Presidents became committed to enforcing the **Monroe Doctrine of 1823**, a doctrine intended as a warning to Europe not to colonize or increase their influence in the Western Hemisphere.

In an age when Europeans were building empires, the United States reemphasized the doctrine and even extended it. Now the United States had a strong military and could do more than merely suggest that Europe comply. Through a series of incidences in the 1890s, the United States demonstrated a clear willingness not only to threaten military action but also to actually use force when necessary.

Foreign Policy in the Late 1800s

PRESIDENT	POLICY	DATE	INCIDENT	SUMMARY
Benjamin Harrison	Aggressive foreign policy	1891	Dispute with Chile	Two sailors on shore leave were killed in a brawl with locals, and dozens of others were injured or jailed. The United States demanded an apology and threatened war. The Chilean government issued a formal apology and paid an indemnity (money for an injury or a loss). The tensions eased.
Grover Cleveland	Monroe Doctrine	1895	Venezuela border dispute with Britain	A boundary dispute arose between Venezuela and the British colony of Guiana. When the United States offered to mediate the dispute, the English refused. Under threat of war, the British agreed to arbitration. The confrontation led to closer ties between England and the United States.
William McKinley	Aggressive foreign policy	1898	Spanish atrocities (brutal acts) in Cuba and the U.S.S. <i>Maine</i> explosion	The United States went to war with Spain and forced the Spanish to give up Cuba, Guam, the Philippines, and Puerto Rico.

Section 6.7, continued Latin America

The Spanish-American War represented a turning point in U.S. foreign policy. The United States had become a colonial empire although they had few possessions in comparison to other imperial nations. Most of what would take place in the early 20th century would be aimed at preserving order in Latin America and protecting those republics from imperialist powers abroad. Each of the first three 20th century Presidents had his own particular style of foreign policy with varying degrees of success.

Foreign Policy in the Early 1900s

PRESIDENT	POLICY	DATE	SUMMARY
Theodore Roosevelt	1901 – 1909	Big Stick	The Big Stick policy was based on an African proverb, “Speak softly and carry a big stick; you will go far.” Roosevelt’s “big stick” was the U.S. military, which he used to back his aggressive foreign policy.
	1904	Roosevelt Corollary	The Roosevelt Corollary was an extension of the Monroe Doctrine to say that the United States could intervene in any dispute that threatened republics of the Western Hemisphere. The United States acted as a policeman to Latin America.
Howard Taft	1909 – 1913	Dollar Diplomacy	Dollar Diplomacy substituted dollars as the motivating force behind foreign policy rather than “bullets.” Taft encouraged investment by big business in foreign countries in hopes that the growing economies would bring about stable governments in Latin America.
Woodrow Wilson	1913 – 1921	Moral or Missionary Diplomacy	Moral or Missionary Diplomacy was designed to neutralize both the Big Stick and Dollar Diplomacy of the two Presidents before Wilson. His hope was to encourage democracy by rewarding countries that pursued similar goals to the United States and to punish countries who did not. Ironically, Wilson intervened in Latin America more than either Roosevelt or Taft.

In 1901, Teddy Roosevelt became the third Vice President to inherit the presidency as the result of an assassin’s bullet. Being a forceful man, he was a very aggressive President, particularly when it came to a canal across Central America.

The Panama Canal

The war with Spain pointed out the obvious need for a canal across Central America to make it easier for American ships to get from the Pacific Ocean to the Caribbean Sea (and the Atlantic). Without a canal, American ships in the Pacific had to sail around the tip of South America to get to Cuba. Because it took so long to get warships to Cuba, the United States proposed digging a canal across the narrow strip of land between North and South America. A narrow strip of land between two land masses is called an **isthmus**.

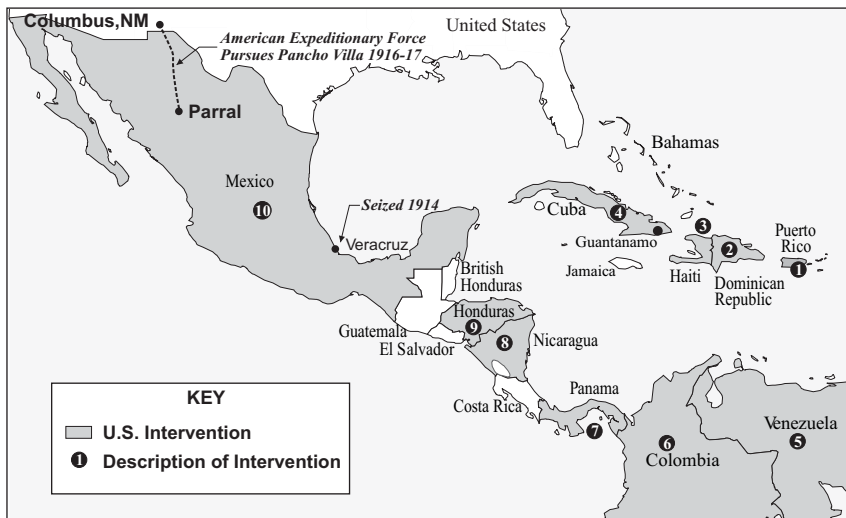
Early in his presidency, Teddy Roosevelt began to negotiate for the right to build a canal across the isthmus of Panama, which was a part of Colombia, South America, at the time. When the Colombians wanted too much money, the United States helped the people of Panama to rebel and to become a free country. The United States quickly acknowledged Panama as a new republic and just as quickly negotiated to build the canal there. After overcoming many hardships, the **Panama Canal** was completed in 1914.



I took the Isthmus, started the canal and then left Congress not to debate the canal, but to debate me.

Theodore Roosevelt
Speech at UC Berkeley, 1911

Section 6.7, continued Latin America



U.S. Intervention in Latin America 1900 to WWI

- ① Puerto Rico – U.S. territory 1900 to present
- ② Dominican Republic – U.S. manages finances; pays debts 1905 – 1924
- ③ Haiti – military occupation 1915 – 1934 to maintain order and manage debts
- ④ Cuba – U.S. protectorate; U.S. leased military base at Guantanamo; troops sent in 1906 – 09, 1912, 1917
- ⑤ Venezuela – U.S. blocked Europeans from taking military action to collect debts, 1904
- ⑥ Colombia – U.S. supported Panamanian revolt against Colombia, 1904
- ⑦ Panama – Canal zone occupation, troops sent to restore order 1908, 1912, 1918 – 20
- ⑧ Nicaragua – U.S. troops 1907, 1910, 1912 – 1933
- ⑨ Honduras – U.S. troops 1903, 1907, 1911, 1912

⑩ Mexico – Torn by revolutions in 1910 and 1913, Mexico was taken over by General Huerta who established himself as a dictator. Woodrow Wilson refused to recognize Huerta’s government and seized the port of Veracruz in 1914 to block shipment of arms to Huerta in support of Venustiano Carranza. One of Carranza’s generals Pancho Villa raided the American town of Columbus, New Mexico, to provoke the U.S. against Carranza. Wilson sent U.S. troops led by General John J. Pershing to capture Villa in 1916. The Americans pursued Villa some 300 miles into Mexican territory but failed to catch him. Further attempts to locate Villa seemed likely to provoke war with Mexico. The American troops were withdrawn in 1917, and a settlement between the U.S. and Mexico was mediated by the **ABC Powers** (Argentina, Brazil, and Chile).

These were just some of the interventions from 1900 until the First World War. Well into the 20th century, Latin American foreign policy followed the intervention model. As you can imagine, this kind of policy generated anger throughout much of Latin America as the interventions continued for many years. More about that later.

Practice

Choose the correct answer for the following questions on imperialism in Latin America.

1. Which President intervened in Latin America more than any other during the early 1900s?
 - A. Theodore Roosevelt
 - B. Woodrow Wilson
 - C. William McKinney
 - D. Howard Taft
2. From the map above, which country was invaded because of a rogue general?
 - F. Puerto Rico
 - G. Nicaragua
 - H. Mexico
 - J. Cuba
3. Which of the following is an example of “Big Stick” diplomacy?
 - A. the Hawaiian annexation
 - B. war with Spain
 - C. the pursuit of Pancho Villa into Mexico
 - D. the Panama Canal
4. How is it that the United States can maintain a military base at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba?
 - F. The base is leased from the Cubans.
 - G. The base is in lieu of an embassy in Cuba.
 - H. The base protects Cubans from civil war.
 - J. The base was a gift from the Cuban people.
5. How was the dispute between the United States and Mexico settled just before World War I?
 - A. It was negotiated directly by American and Mexican diplomats
 - B. It was mediated by Chile, Brazil, and Argentina.
 - C. It was negotiated by Carranza and Wilson in a face to face meeting.
 - D. It was settled by the Treaty of Paris in 1919.