

COMPARATIVE POLITICS

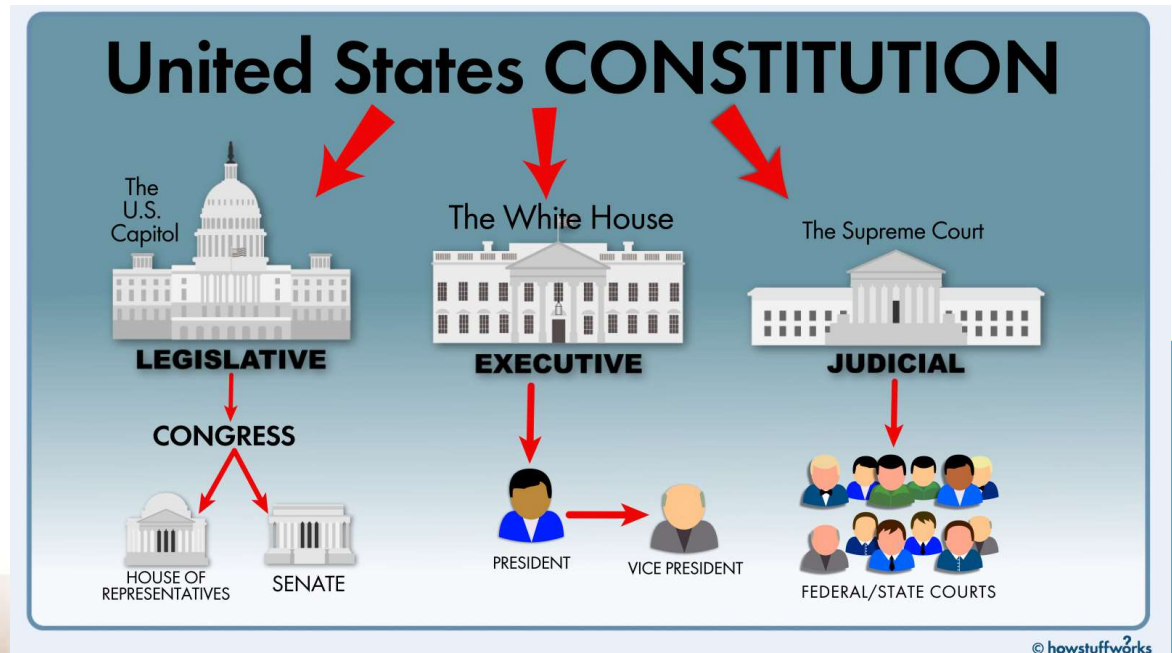
Governing Institutions in Democracies



DEPARTMENT OF
POLITICAL SCIENCE

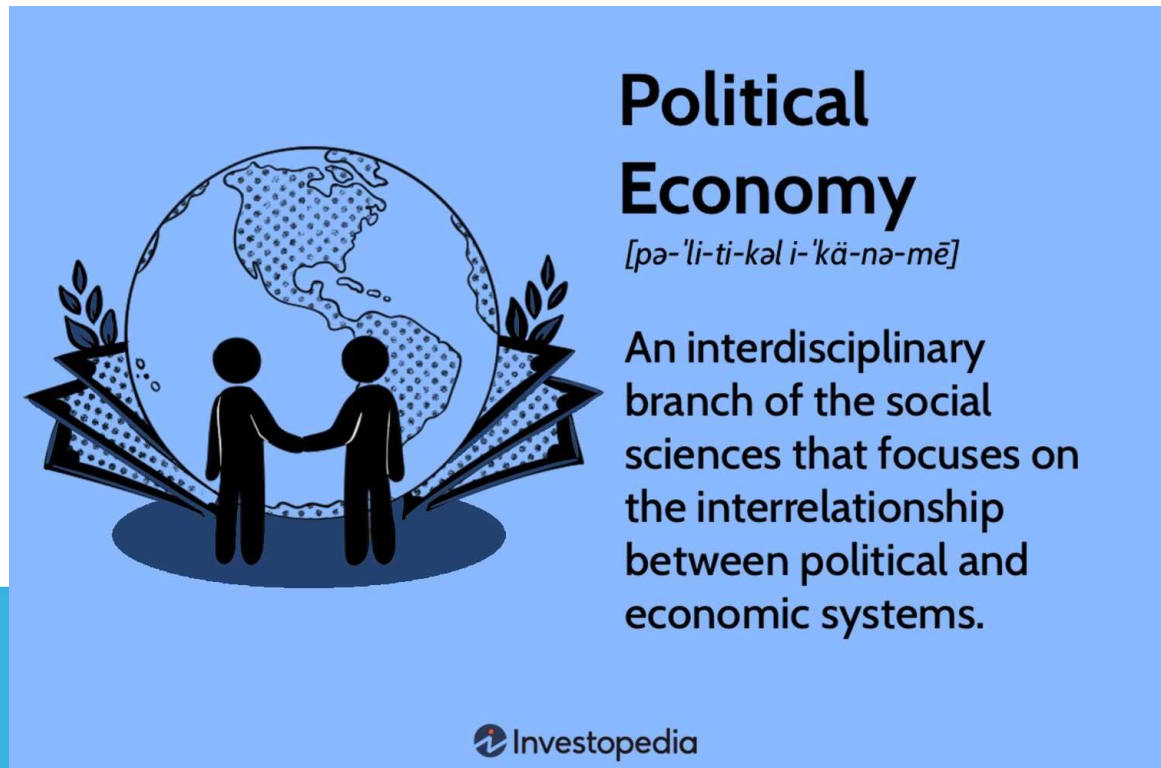
INTRODUCTORY COMMENTS AND KEY QUESTIONS

Orvis and **Drogus** suggest that Americans are taught from a young age the importance of the three branches of government – executive, legislative, and judicial – and how essential their separate but equal status is for democracy.



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But understanding politics requires far more than simply understanding the formal institutions of government, but also the social, cultural, and historical contexts in which those formal institutions of government operate.

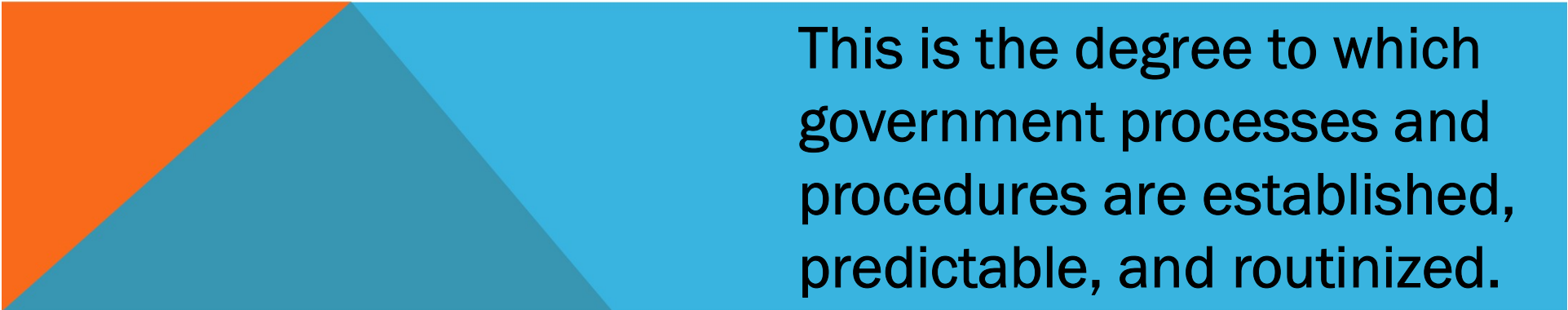


Hmmm...what about economic?

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The first question we have to ask has to do with institutionalization.

In sociology, institutionalisation (or **institutionalization**) refers to the process of embedding some conception (for example a belief, norm, social role, particular value or mode of behavior) within an organization, social **system**, or society as a whole.



This is the degree to which government processes and procedures are established, predictable, and routinized.

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Who rules?

Political Accountability – The ability of the citizenry, directly or indirectly, to control political leaders and institutions.



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Two methods for analyzing the extent to which the power of key state institutions are under democratic control:

Congress,

the Press,

and Political

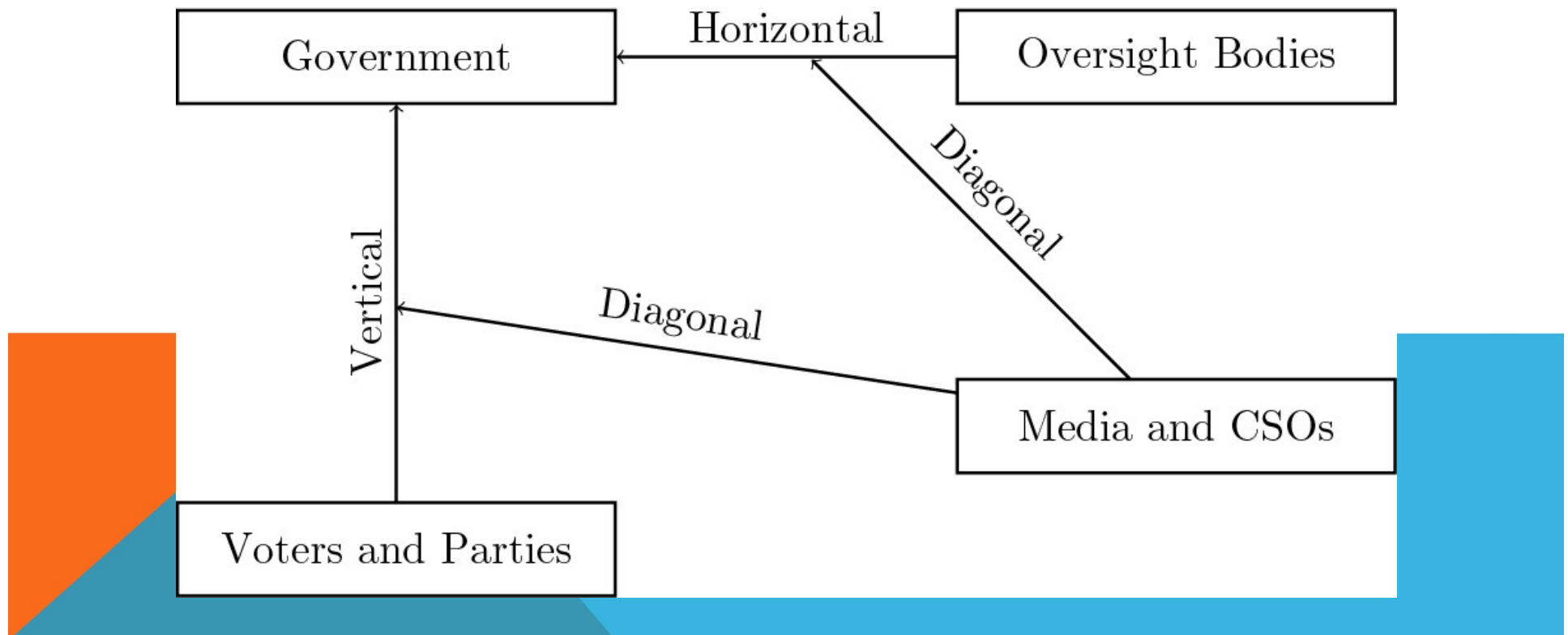
Accountability

R. DOUGLAS ARNOLD

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Vertical Accountability

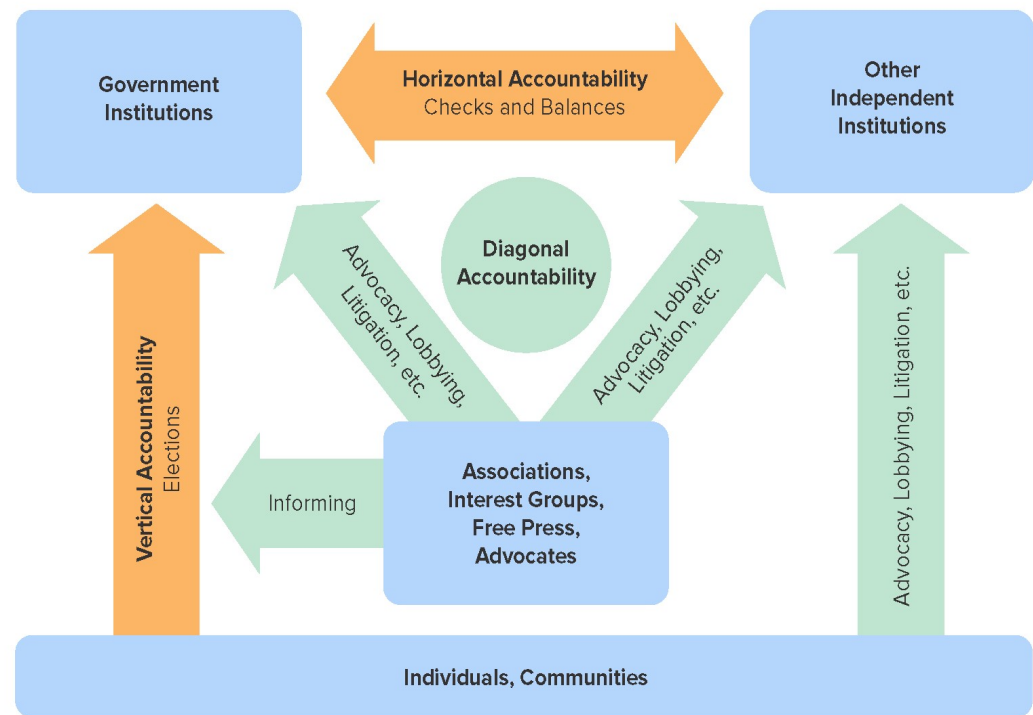
The ability of individuals and groups in a society to hold state institutions accountable.



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Horizontal Accountability

The ability of state institutions to hold one another accountable.



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Executive

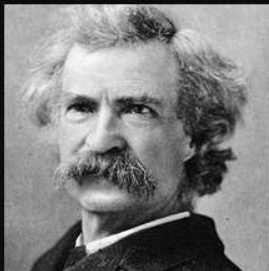
The branch of government that must exist in all modern states; the chief political power in a state and implements all laws.



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Legislature

Branch of government that makes the law in a democracy.



No man's life, liberty, or property are safe while the legislature is in session.

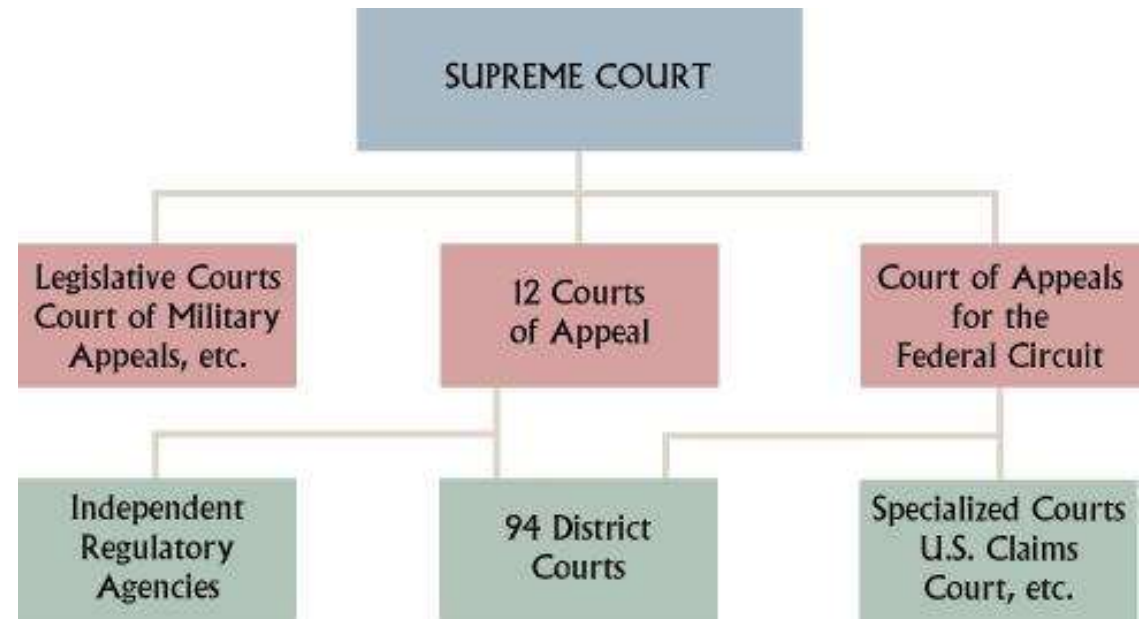
~ Mark Twain

AZ QUOTES

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Judicial

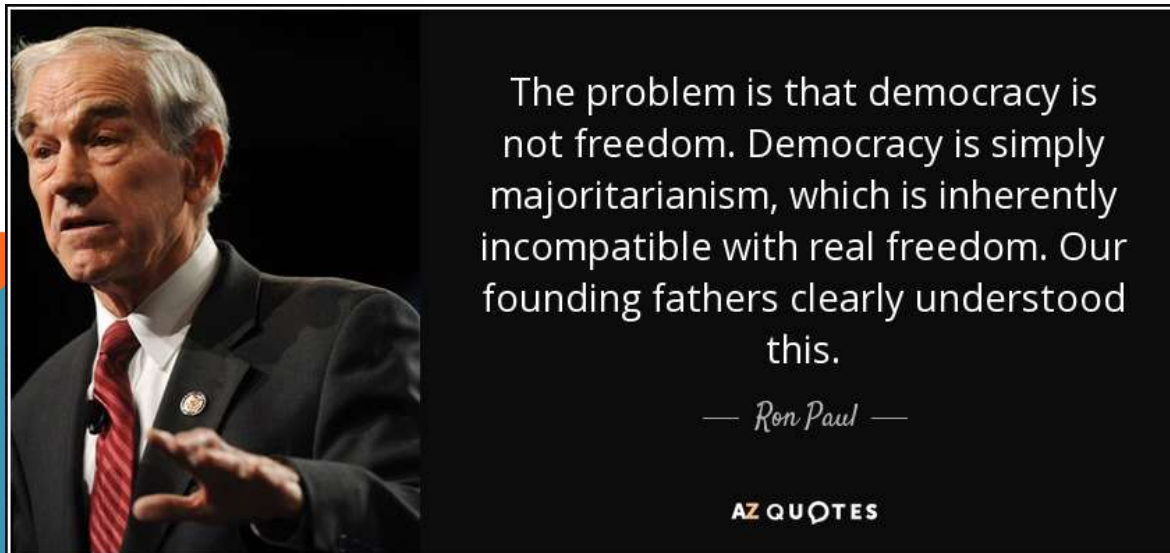
Branch of government that interprets the law and applies it to individual cases.



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Majoritarian Democracy

A type of democratic system that concentrates power more tightly in a single-party executive with executive dominance over the legislature a single legislative branch, and constitutions that can be easily amended.



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Consensus Democracy

A democratic system with multiparty executives in a coalition government, executive-legislative balance, bicameral legislatures, and rigid constitutions that are not easily amended.



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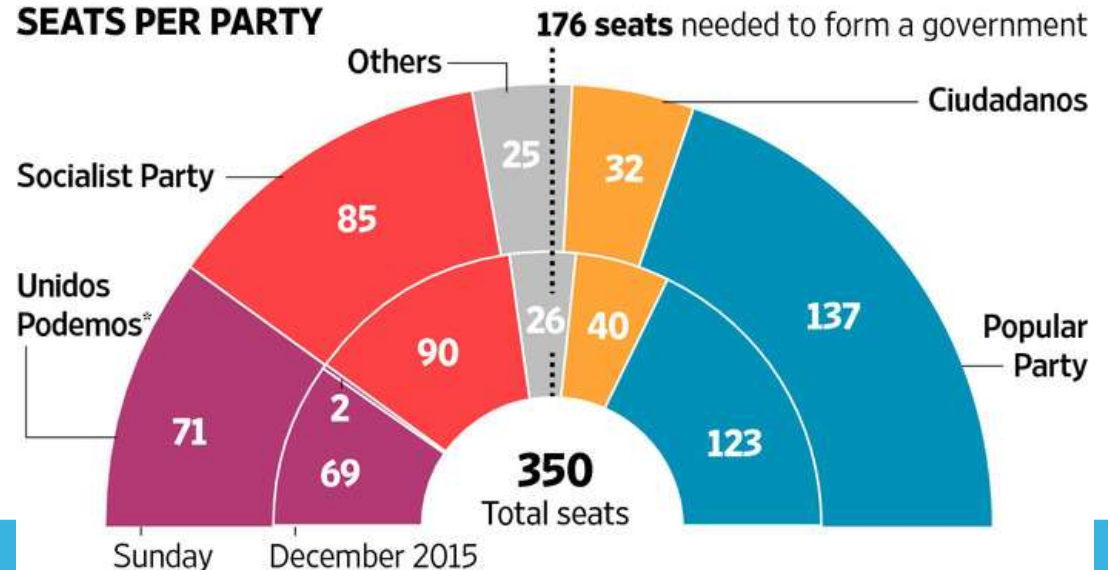
Coalition Government

Government in a parliamentary system in which at least two parties negotiate an agreement to rule together.

Round Two

Spaniards voted for the second time in six months Sunday and once again elected a fragmented parliament, setting the stage for more negotiations among parties.

SEATS PER PARTY



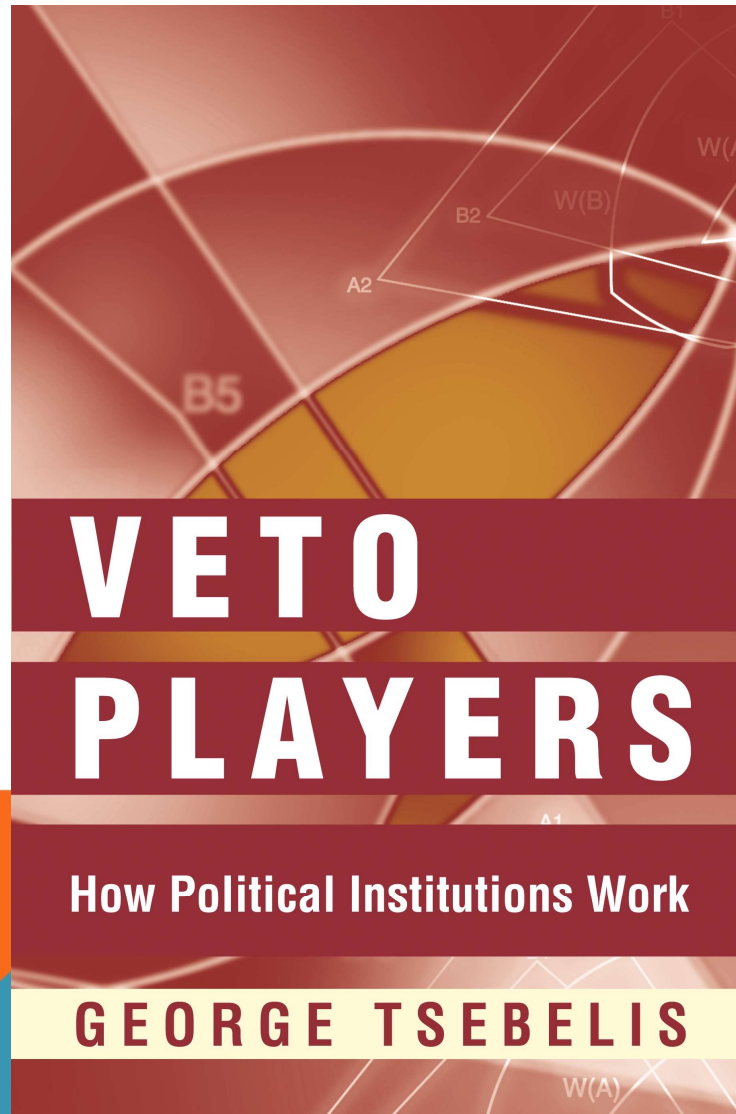
*An alliance of parties formed after the December vote.

Notes: With 99.95% of vote counted; Parties positioned left to right based on political leanings

Source: Spain's Interior Ministry

THE WALL STREET JOURNAL.

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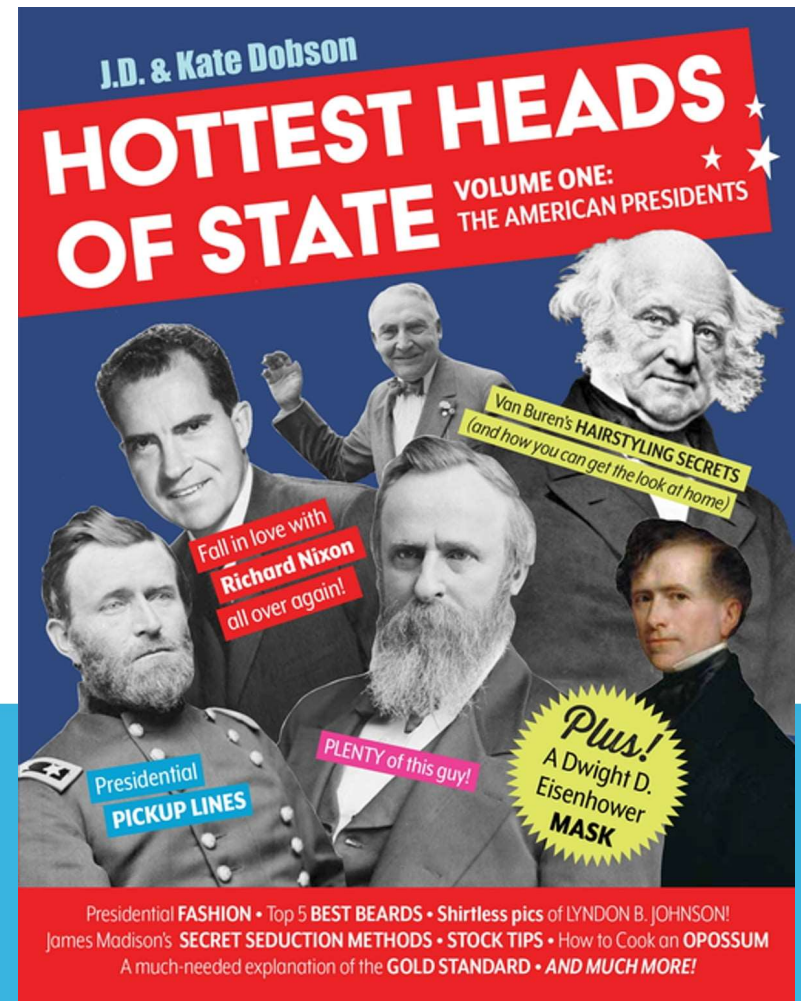
Veto Player

An individual or collective actor whose agreement is essential for any policy change.

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Executives and Legislatures

Head of State – The official, symbolic representative of a country, authorized to speak on its behalf and represent it, particularly in world affairs; usually a president or a monarch.



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Roles of the President

Head of State

The Constitution confers specific powers on the president;

- He is commander-in-chief of the armed services (but he cannot declare war)
- He negotiates and signs treaties with other countries (although they need to be ratified by the Senate)
- He is in charge of diplomatic relations with other countries
- He has the power to issue pardons to anyone convicted of a crime

These duties are carried out in most countries by the Head of State, so the president carries this title, although this is not specified in the Constitution.

Head of Government

The Constitution also confers the following two powers on the president;

- He is responsible for appointing people to head government departments, subject to confirmation by the Senate.
- He can call Congress back into session during a break (recess) at times of national emergency.

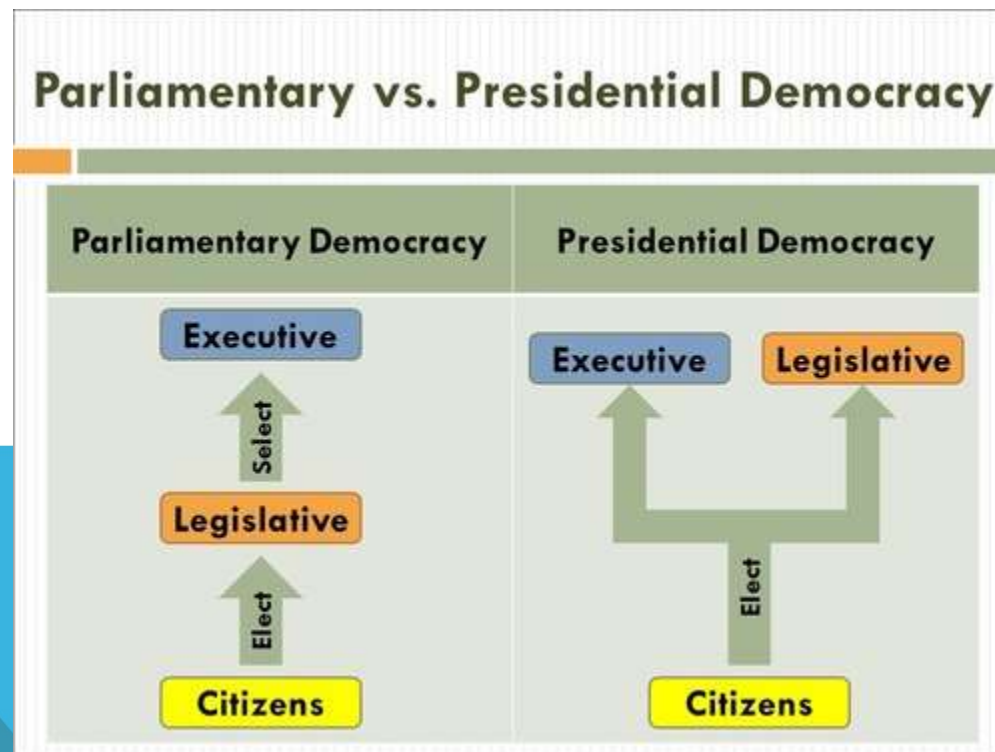
These duties are carried out in most countries by the head of the government, so the president carries this title, although again this is not specified in the Constitution.

Head of Government

The key executive power in a state; usually a president or prime minister.

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Parliamentarism – A term denoting a parliamentary system of democracy in which the executive and legislative branches are fused via parliament's election of the chief executive.



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Prime Minister (PM)

The head of
government in
parliamentary or
semipresidential
systems

Member of Parliament (MP)

An elected member
of the legislature
in a
parliamentary
system



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Vote of No Confidence

In parliamentary systems, a vote by parliament to remove a government (the prime minister and cabinet) from power

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PRESIDENTIALISM OR PARLIAMENTARISM?

- **Presidentialism:**
 - ✓ Head of government (president) is directly elected
 - ✓ Fixed term in office
 - ✓ Cannot be removed by legislature (except through impeachment)
 - ✓ Selects cabinet ministers
 - ✓ Head of government is also head of state
 - ✓ Separation of legislative-executive powers

Presidentialism

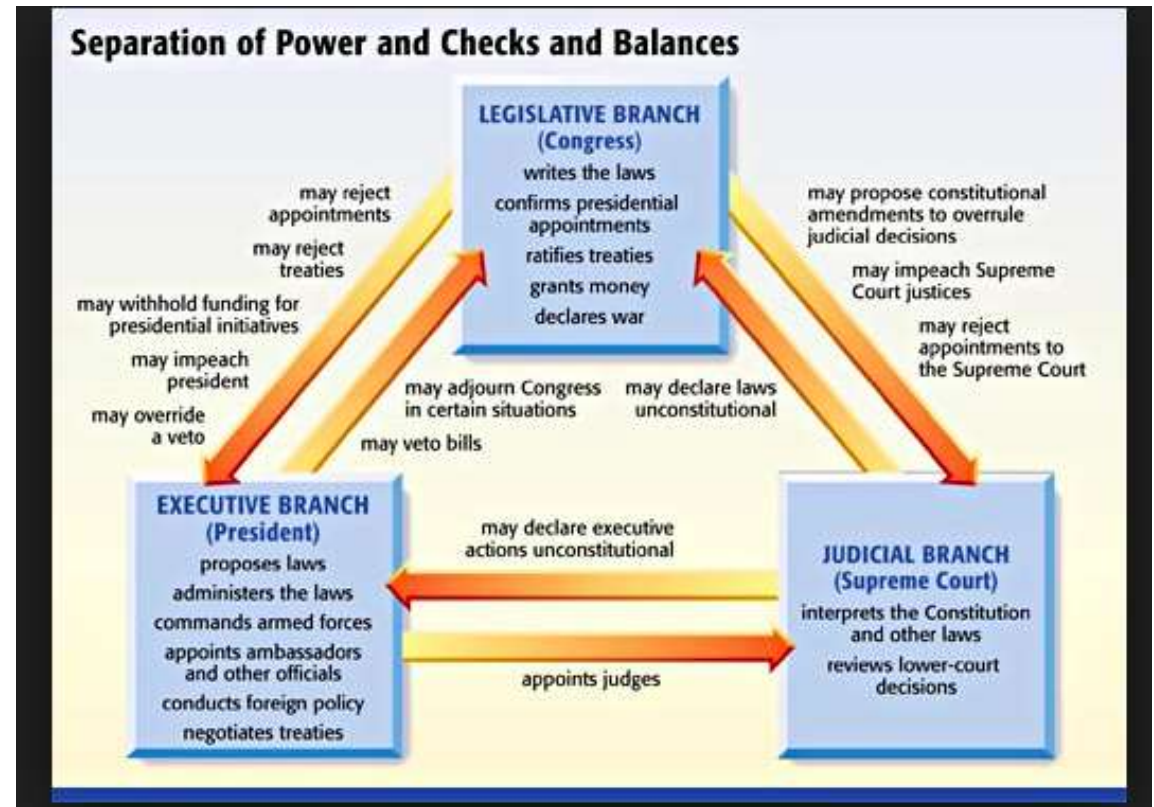
A term denoting a presidential system of democracy in which the executive and legislature are elected independently and have separate and independent powers.



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Separation of Powers

Constitutionally explicit division of power among the major branches of government.



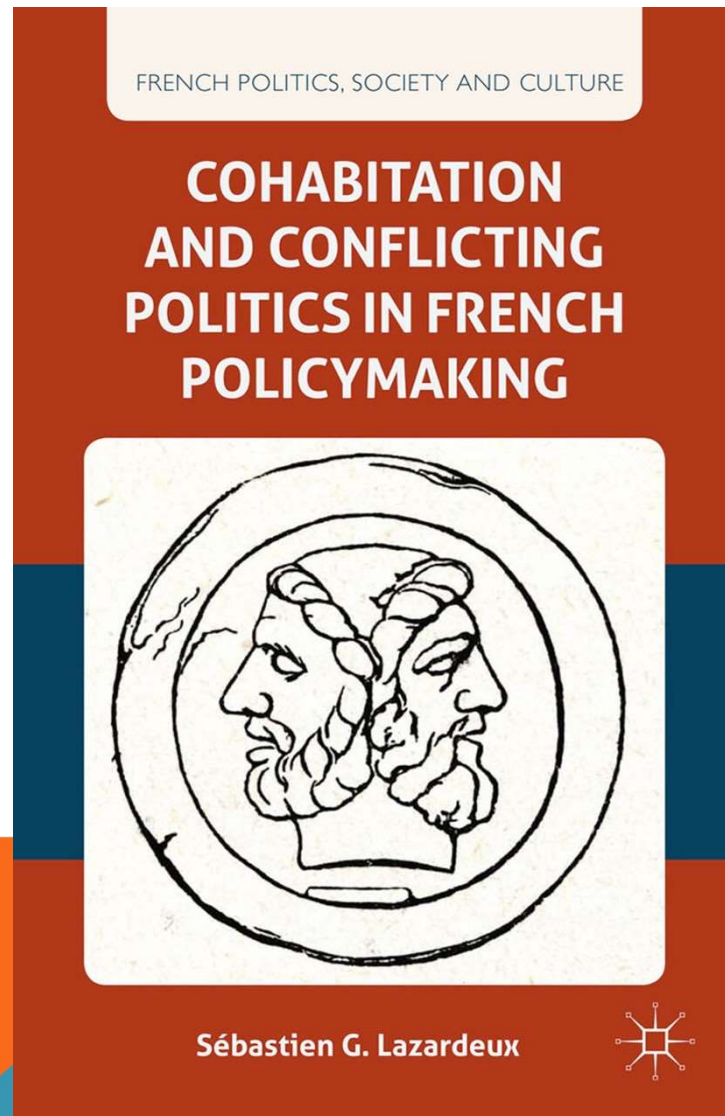
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Semipresidentialism

A term denoting a semipresidential system of democracy in which executive power is divided between a directly elected president and a prime minister elected by a parliament.



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Cohabitation

Sharing of power between a president and prime minister from different parties in a semipresidential system.

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Comparing Executive-Legislative Institutions

Three questions:

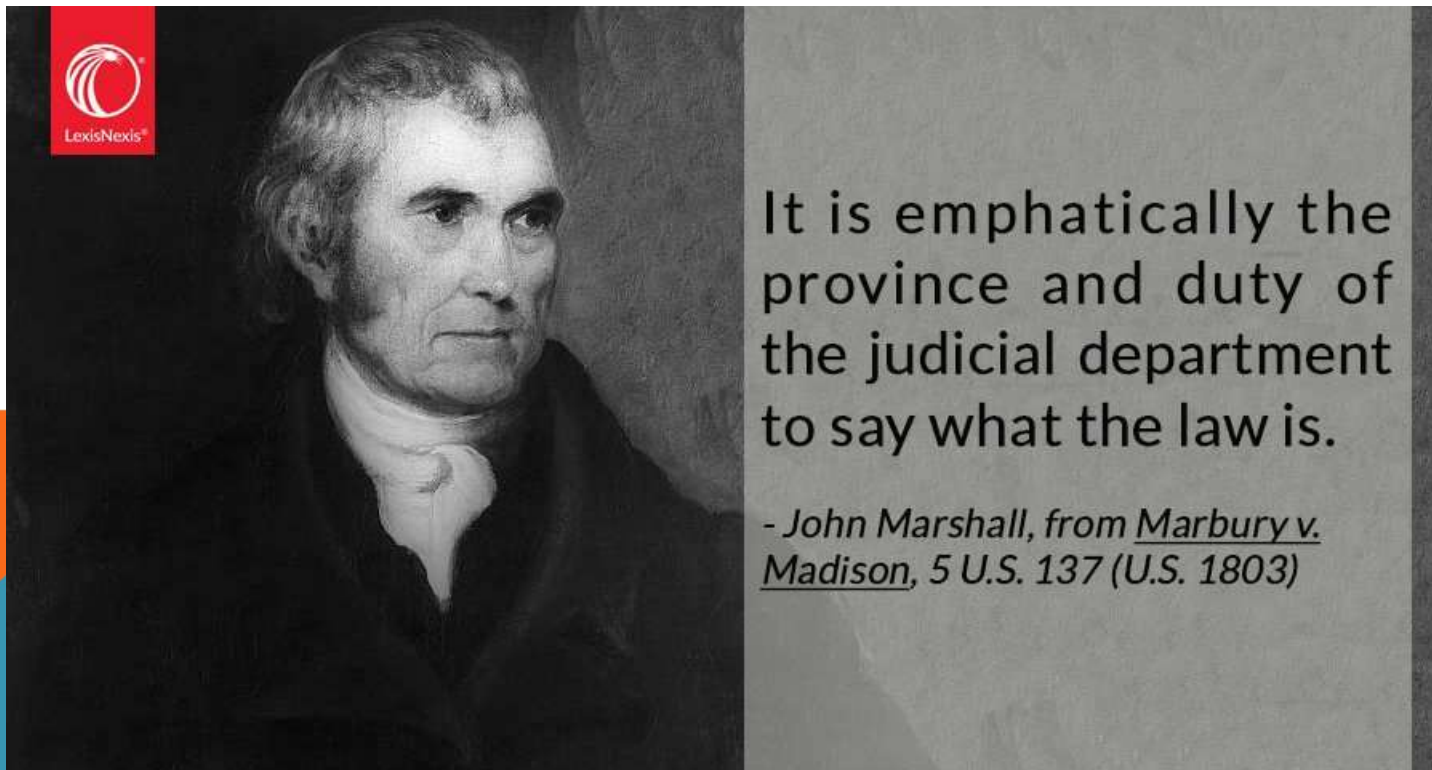
1. Which system is most democratic in the sense of providing *accountability*?
2. Which system is most effective at *making public policy*?
3. Which system provides the greatest political *stability* for a democratic regime?



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Judiciary

Judicial Review – The authority of the judiciary to decide whether a specific law contradicts a country's constitution.



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Common Law

Legal system originating in Britain in which judges base decisions not only on their understanding of the written law but also on their understanding of past court cases; in contrast to code law.

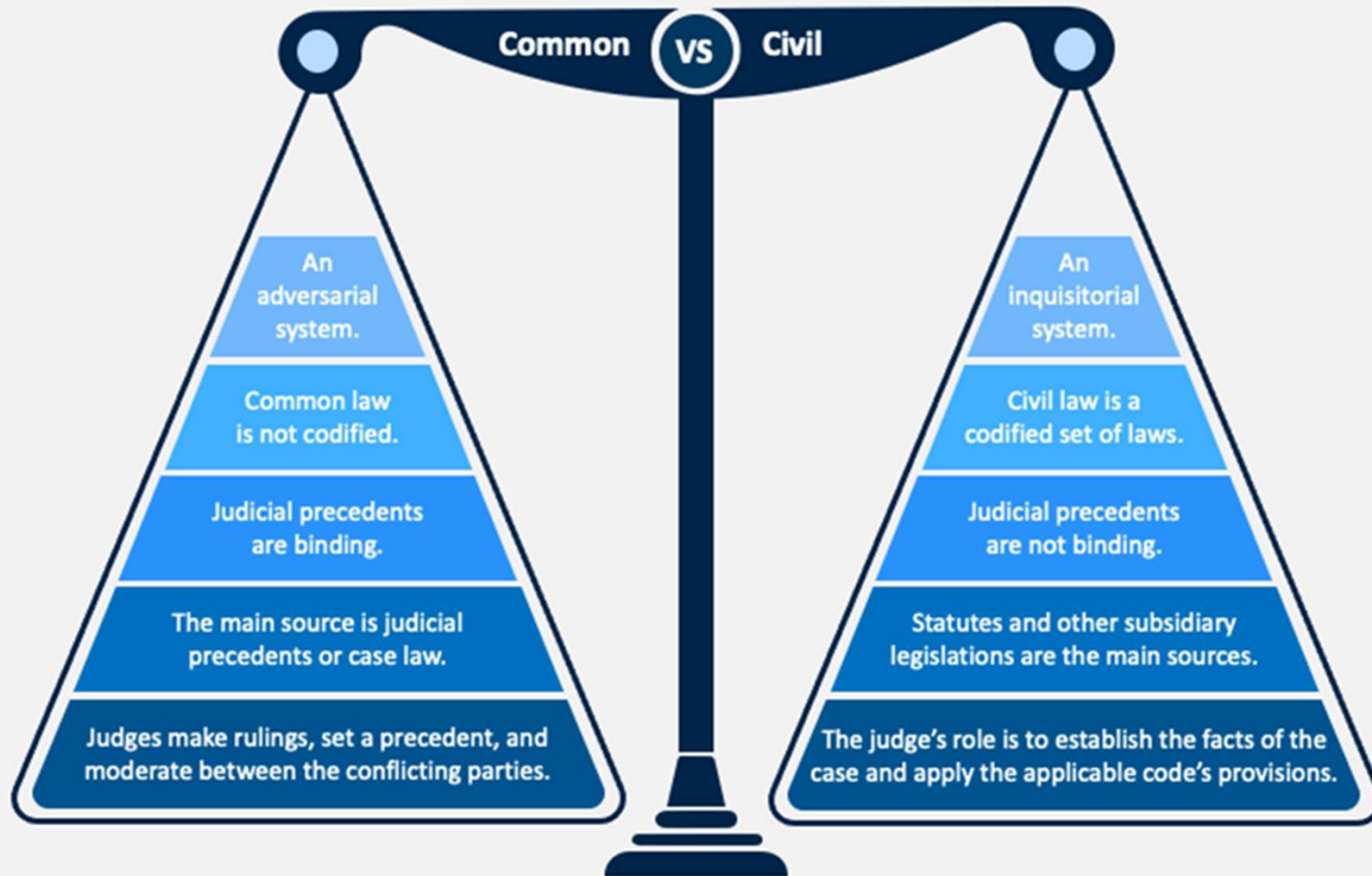


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COMMON LAW VS CIVIL LAW

Source: Pediaa.com

Enter your sub headline here



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Code Law

Legal system originating in ancient Roman law and modified by Napoleon Bonaparte in France, in which judges may only follow the law as written and must ignore past decisions; in contrast to common law.



“code
is law”



Nobody reads
the code anyways
so there are no laws

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Judicial Independence

The belief and ability of judges to decide cases as they think appropriate, regardless of what other people, and especially politically powerful officials or institutions, desire.

Lawyer talking under his breath:
"guilty peoplesaywhat?"

Defendant: what?

Lawyer: no further questions your honor



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Bureaucracy

Principal-Agent Problem – A problem in which a principal hires an agent to perform a task but the agent's self-interest does not necessarily align with the principal's, so the agent may not carry out the task as assigned.

The bureaucracy is expanding to meet the needs of the expanding bureaucracy.



someecards
user card

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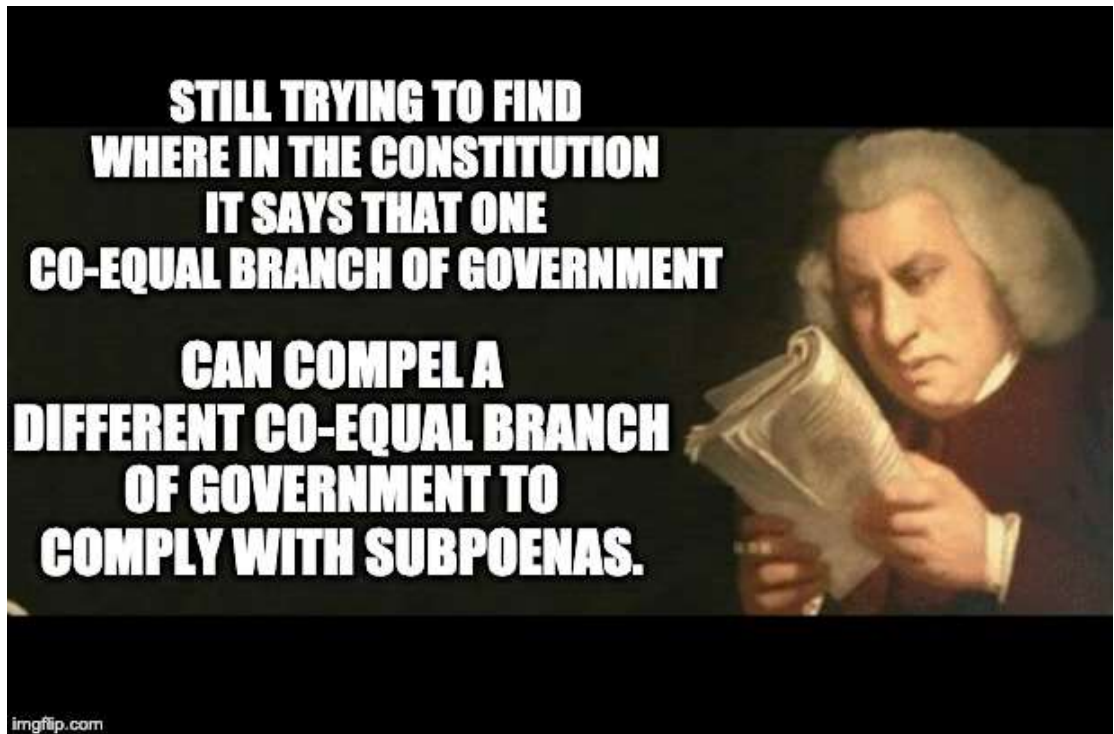
Political Appointees

Officials who serve at the pleasure of the president or prime minister and are assigned the task of overseeing their respective segments of the bureaucracy.

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Legislative Oversight

Occurs when members of the legislature, usually in committees, oversee the bureaucracy.



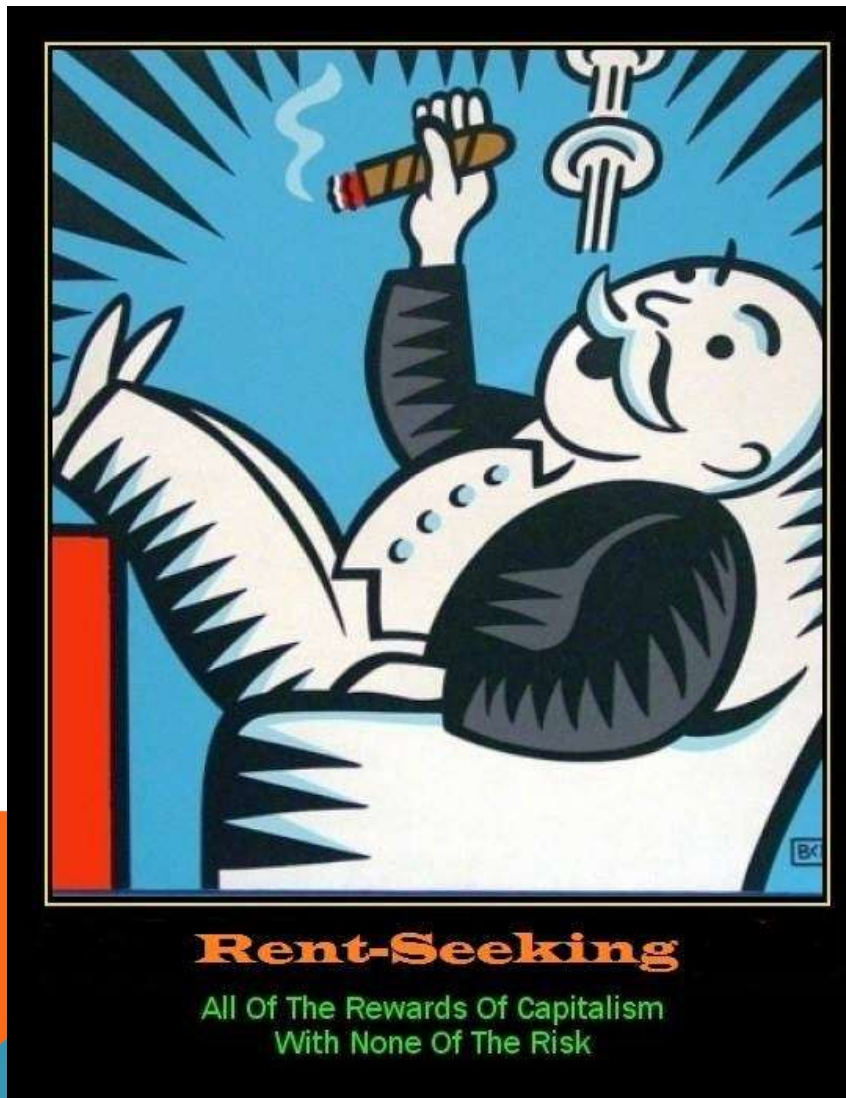
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New Public Management (NPM)

Theory of reform of bureaucracies that argues for the privatizing of many government services, creating competition among agencies to simulate a market, focusing on customer satisfaction, and flattening administrative hierarchies.



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Rent Seeking

Gaining an advantage in a market without engaging in equally productive activity; usually involves using government regulations for one's own benefit.

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Federalism

Unitary Systems

Political systems in which the central government has sole constitutional sovereignty and power; in contrast to a federal system.

Federal Systems

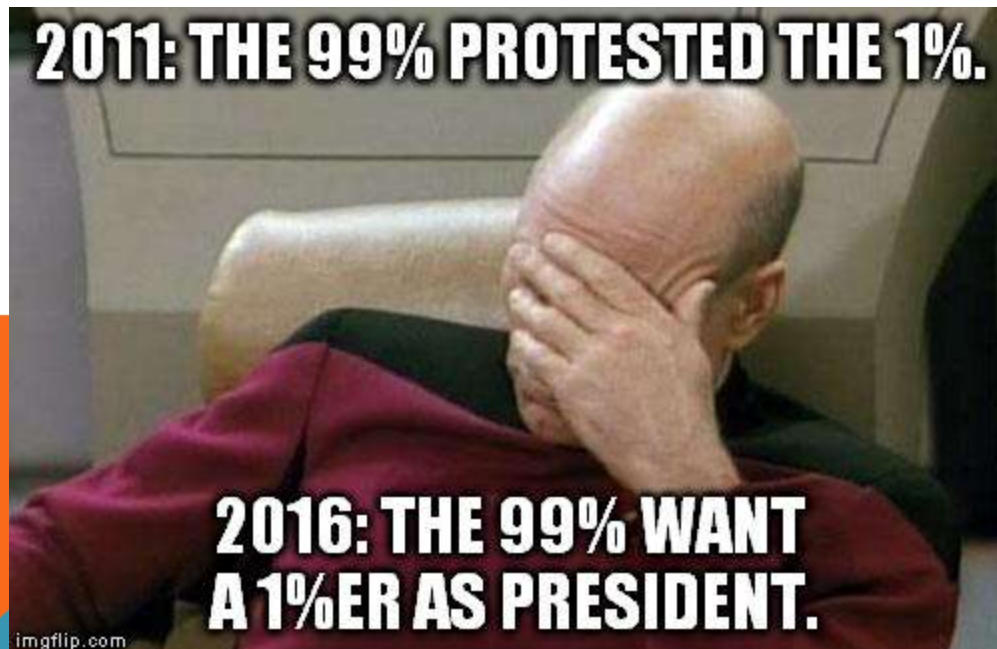
Political systems in which a state's power is legally and constitutionally divided among more than one level of government; in contrast to a unitary system.



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Symmetrical Federal System

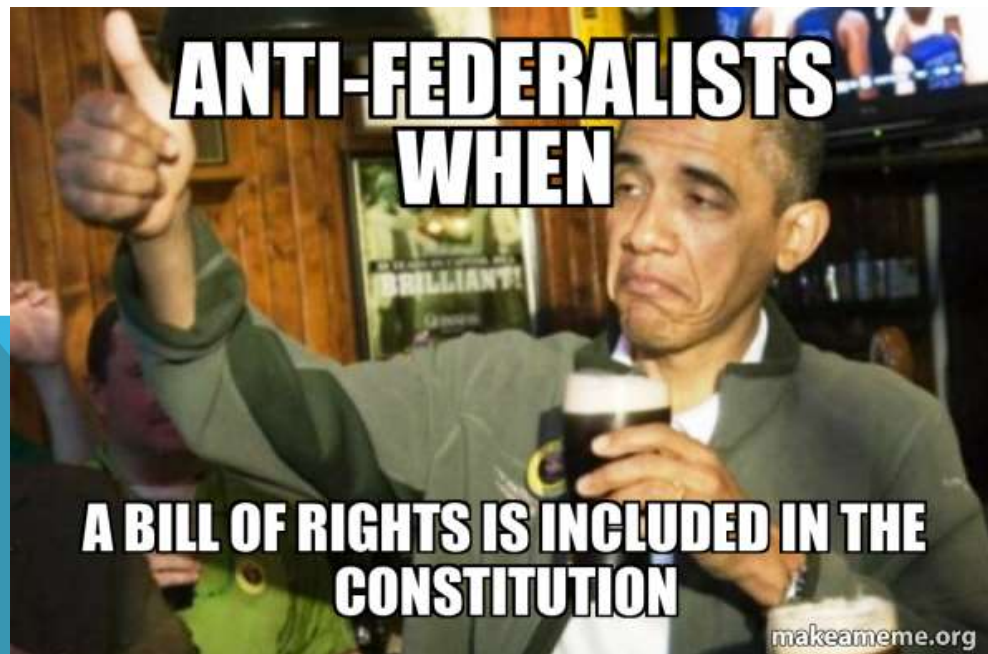
A federal system in which all subnational governments (states or provinces) have the same relationship with and rights in relation to the national government.



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Asymmetrical Federal System

A federal system in which different subnational governments (states or provinces) have distinct relationships with and rights in relation to the national government.



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Devolution

Partial decentralization of power from central government to subunits such as states or provinces, with subunits' power being dependent on central government and reversible.



When people
think the government
has all the power

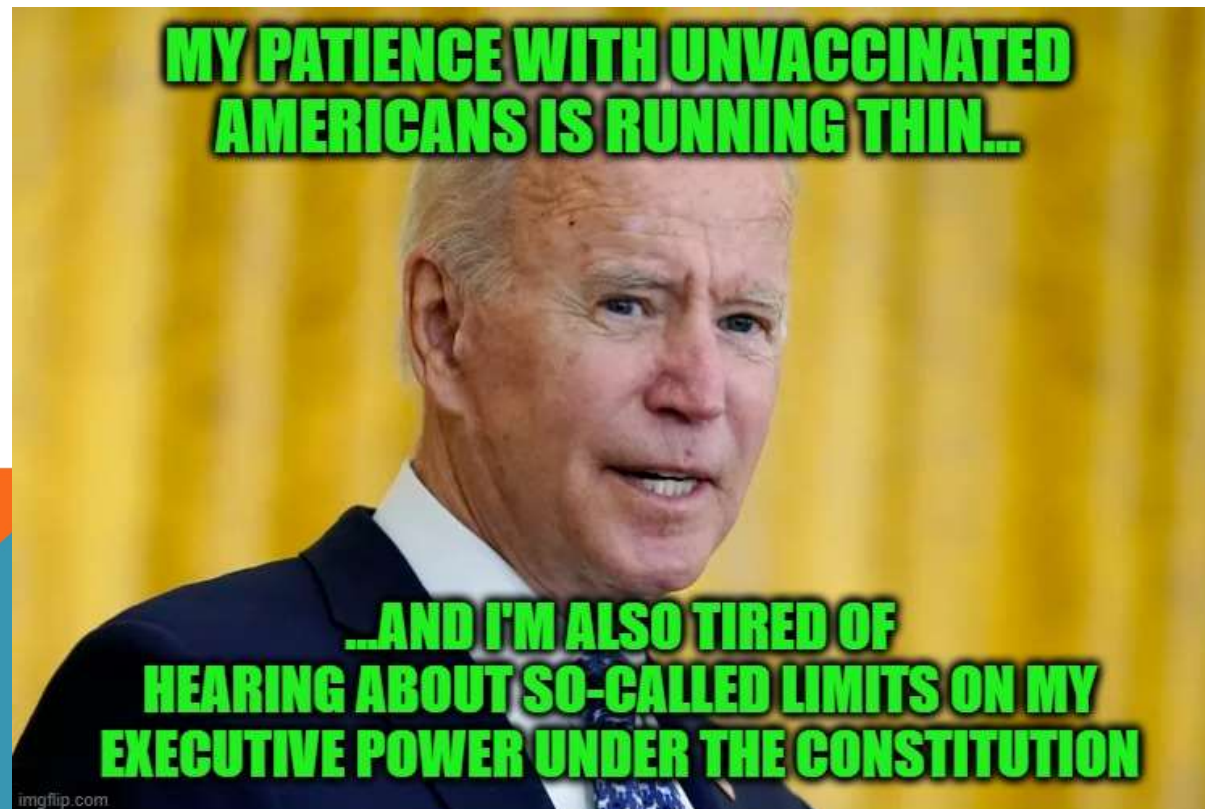
But the 10th
Amendment says
people/states
have more equal power

imgflip.com

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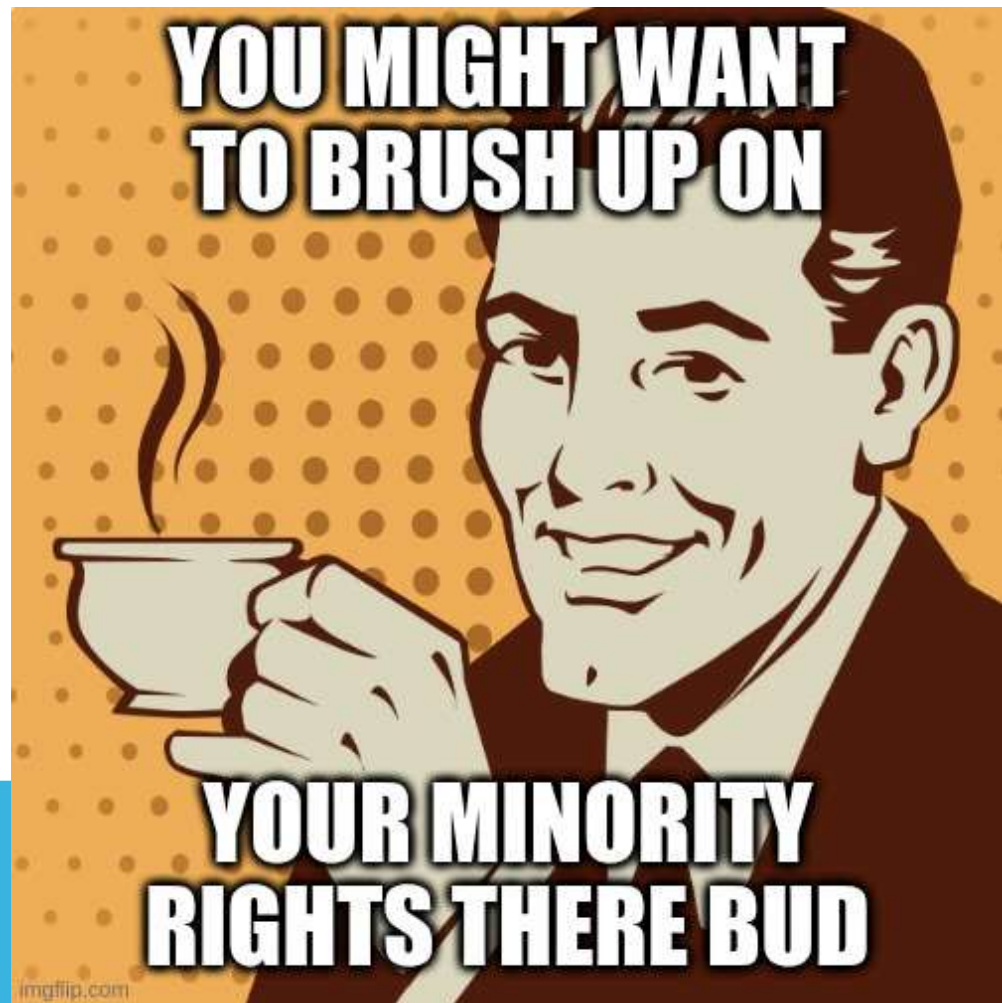
Some concluding thoughts...

1. How can the executive power of the state be effectively limited?

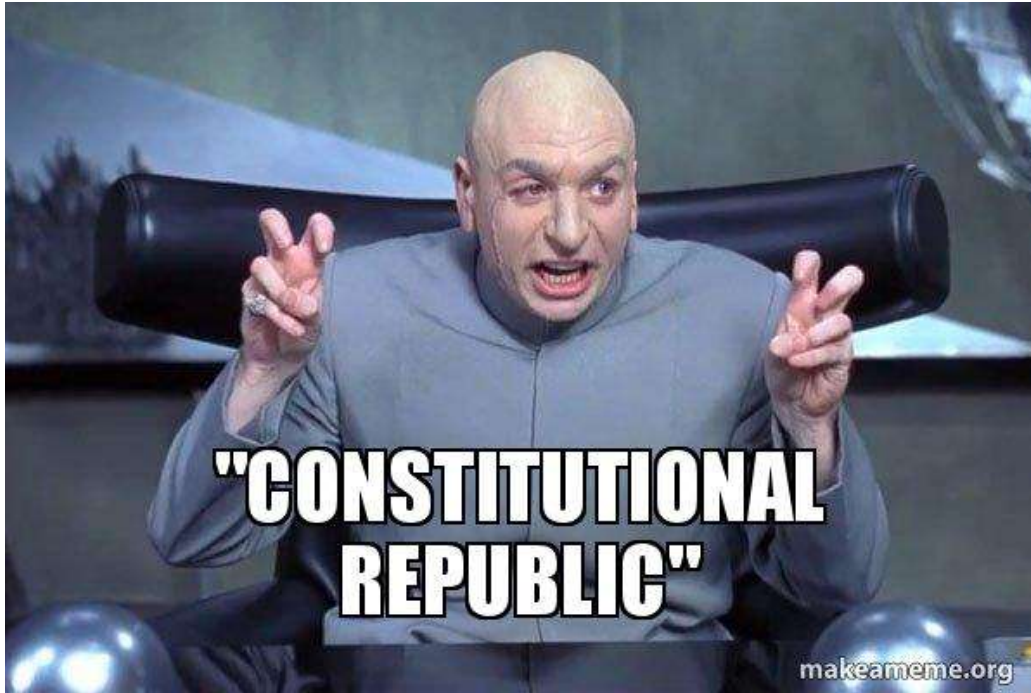


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2. In a liberal democracy, how do we protect minority rights?



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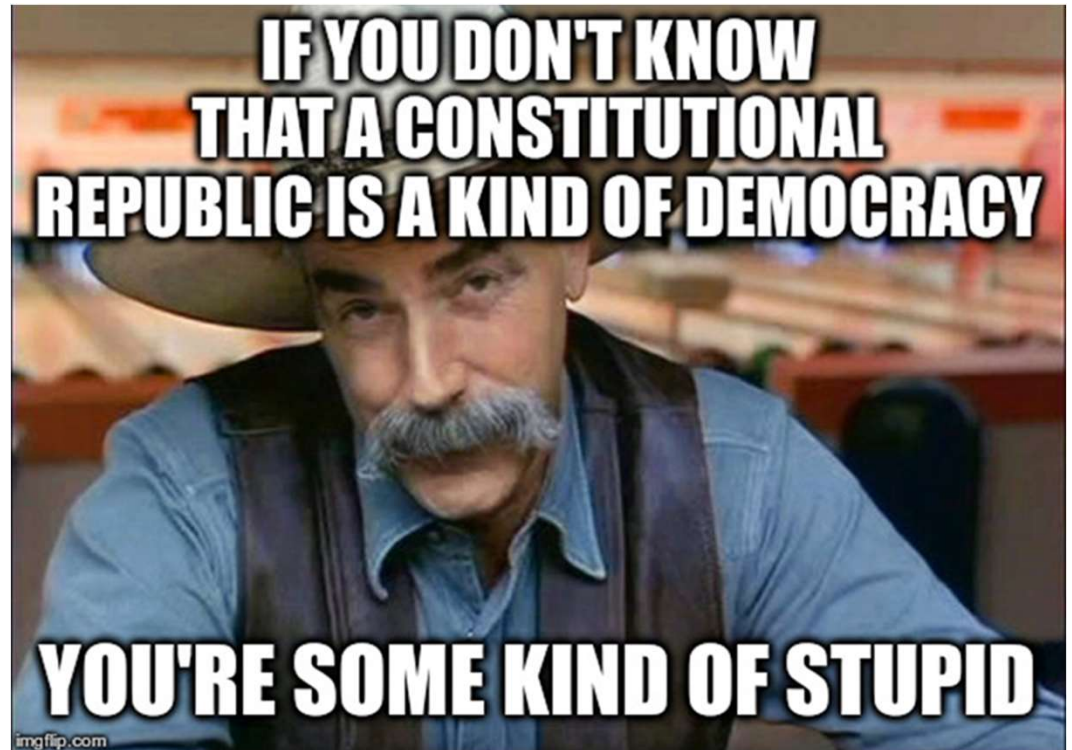


3. Representation and effective policymaking:

Do some institutions provide more of one or the other, and does a clear optimum balance between them exist?

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The authors note that no clear answer to the question of why an institution works better in one place than another is obvious, though certainly social, political, and ethnic contexts matter greatly.



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A society that is deeply divided by ethnic difference and other past conflicts is likely to benefit from a more consensual set of institutions that requires compromise at every step of the way.



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The entire study of democratic institutions is also enmeshed in the theoretical debate between pluralists and elite theorists over who rules.

Pluralism vs. Elitism

- *Pluralism* is the pattern of struggles among numerous interests (factions) over the political process and policy
- *Elitism* is the influence of a single group of elites over the political process and policy



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