

Launching the Nation

Section 1



MAIN IDEAS

1. In 1789 George Washington became the first president of the United States.
2. Congress and the president organized the executive and judicial branches of government.
3. Americans had high expectations for their new government.

Key Terms and People

George Washington an honest leader, a hero of the revolution, and the first U.S. president

electoral college a group of delegates, or electors, who represent the people's vote in choosing the president

Martha Washington George Washington's wife and the First Lady

precedent an action or a decision that later serves as an example

Judiciary Act of 1789 an act that created three levels of federal courts and defined their powers and relationships to the state courts

Academic Vocabulary

agreement a decision reached by two or more people or groups

Section Summary

THE FIRST PRESIDENT

George Washington was unanimously elected by the **electoral college** in January 1789. John Adams became his vice president. **Martha Washington** entertained and accompanied her husband at social events. She was in charge of the presidential household. Other women, such as Abigail Adams, wife of John Adams, believed women needed to play a larger role in the nation than Martha Washington did. They thought that women should take a more important role in society because they educated their children to be good citizens.

Why did some women support a larger national role for women?

ORGANIZING THE GOVERNMENT

The new federal government had to establish a **precedent** when creating policies and procedures

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that would have a great influence on the future of the nation. Congress formed departments in the executive branch to oversee various areas of national policy. Washington consulted with department heads, or cabinet members, who advised him. Our presidents today also meet with their key advisers.

Congress passed the **Judiciary Act of 1789**. This act created the federal court system and the courts' location. The president nominates candidates for federal judgeships. The Senate holds the power to approve or reject the candidates.

What did cabinet members provide for the president?

What limited the president's ability to nominate federal judges?

AMERICANS' EXPECTATIONS FOR THE NATION

Americans had high expectations of their government. They wanted trade that did not have the limits put in place by the British Parliament. They also expected the government to protect them and keep the economy strong.

In 1790 four million people lived in the United States. Most Americans worked on farms. They hoped for fair taxes and the right to move onto western lands. Americans who lived in towns worked as craftspeople, laborers, or merchants. They wanted help with their businesses. Merchants wanted simpler trade laws. Manufacturers wanted laws to shield them from overseas competitors.

Most cities were small. Only New York and Philadelphia topped 25,000 residents. New York City, the first capital, reflected the new nation's spirit. In 1792 some 24 Wall Street stockbrokers signed an **agreement** that eventually created the New York Stock Exchange.

Underline the sentences that explain the contrast between what country residents and town residents wanted.

In what year was the agreement signed that led to the New York Stock Exchange?

CHALLENGE ACTIVITY

Critical Thinking: Evaluating You have just attended George Washington's inauguration. Write a letter to a friend describing your thoughts about him.