

Framers the Bill of Rights

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George Mason, a delegate from the state of Virginia, proposed the addition of the Bill of Rights to the United States Constitution that was to be presented for ratification. In Mason's perspective, outlining the bill or rights in the constitution would give the people a great quiet. He also reasoned that preparing the Bill of Rights would only take a few hours. His remarks prompted Elbridge Gerry to appoint the committee for the preparation of the bill. However, the motion was defeated without any debate by the delegates. It is nonetheless critical to understand that the delegates rejected Mason's proposal not because they opposed it but for other reasons.

Contrary to popular views, the delegates were not opposed to the principle of the Bill of Rights but rather found it unnecessary, considering that the new constitution would only grant the federal government enumerated powers. Nonetheless, there existed a particular section of the framers who became skeptical of the utility of parchment barriers against popular perspective, as referred to by James Madison. This section of delegates was concerned with other critical issues, such as structural arrangements that would ensure checks and balances and separation of powers and thus would provide protection to the citizens.

According to some delegates, it was unnecessary to include the Bill of Rights in the United States Constitution for ratification since most of the states already had some form of guaranteed rights within their constitutions. Others also argued that the delineation of particular rights would set them apart as the only ones reserved for the citizens. Nonetheless, Carol Berkin also states a more prosaic reason that informed skepticism among the framers of the Constitution. According to her, the framers of the U.S. Constitution had become anxious and were prepared to avoid any more debate that would prolong their stay in the stuffy rooms where they had spent considerable months of contentious debate. The delegates simply wanted to go home and had to reject the proposal.

Part 2

Based on the available evidence, there is no doubt that the framers of the Constitution deliberately ignored the Bill of Rights. (Library of Congress, n.d.) However, the Bill of Rights was quite important. The antifederalists showed a strong antipathy for a strong federal government and a lack of an elaborate measure outlined in the Constitution to protect citizens' rights. The primary motivations that led to the demand for the Bill of Rights include the belief that each individual had a right to expect the Bill of Rights from the government. Thus, there was no adequate reason for the Federalists to leave it out of the Constitution. Secondly, the antifederalists also sought changes for the inclusion of the Bill of Rights to ensure that they would restrain Congress from enacting laws that would be contrary to these rights. Thus, it was a way of giving courts the mandate to check Congress legislation

to ensure that they did not violate these laws.

The anti-federalists wanted the balance of power to rest in the people's hands and not the government. They recognized the essence of the government in building a cohesive society. However, they wanted to ensure that the government did not become an all-powerful entity that would emasculate all powers and enslave its citizens. Therefore, they had the intrinsic motivation to document these Bills of Rights to ensure that the government was not able to interfere with them in any way.

Part 3

The proposed constitution had limited guarantees to individual rights since the framers primarily intended to establish a masterpiece that would make the federal government effective and strong. The delegates had failed to adopt any proposals to include several rights guarantees, such as the freedom of the press that was submitted by Charles Pinckney. Mason later proposed for the inclusion of the Bill of Rights in September 1787, which did not materialize. Therefore, it was clear that the Constitution did not provide adequate rights and guarantees to the citizens, thus leaving them exposed to the mercy of the federal government. This deliberate omission set the stage for the opposition to the proposed constitution by the anti-federalists who argued for the inclusion of the Bill of Rights to protect the citizens' rights against abrogation by the state.

Therefore, the primary basis that led to vehement opposition to the Constitution by the [anti-Federalists](#) was the lack of the Bill of Rights. They alleged some critical deficiencies of the proposed constitution and thus proposed an amendment that would make the proposed constitution more acceptable and people-friendly before its ratification and adoption. (U.S. Const. amend. I) One of the major reasons for such critical objection was the basis of considerable power that the national government would derive from the new constitution. The anti-Federalists were apprehensive about the power balance and how the proposed constitution failed to address power balance and representation in the national government. As a result, they felt disturbed due to the inadequate safeguards that the proposed constitution had on people's rights.

Secondly, the anti-Federalists were convinced that a strong central government, as indicated under the proposed constitution, would abrogate citizens' rights. It is these critical powers to the national government that made states that already had charters with clearly outlined guarantees of rights become concerned that such a central government would most likely overturn such guarantees.

Part 4

The major immediate consequence of the passage of the Bill of Rights was that it enabled the United States to have a new constitution. The 1787 Constitutional Convention proposed major changes regarding governance and government structure and the powers of each level of government.

However, one of the significant proposals within the new constitution was a transfer of power from the state governments and concentrating it at the central level. The shift increased fear and worry among the antifederalists, who were the majority during the time. In their minds, absolute powers would turn the federal government into a British-like system that did not have respect for the individual citizens' rights.

Therefore, the Federalists agreed to attach the Bill of Rights to the Constitution with the main aim of putting these fears to rest. As a consequence, the Bill of Rights prohibited the central government from infringing on the people's rights. The attachment of the Bill of Rights to the Constitution increased people's willingness to support the Constitution, thus leading to its ratification. Therefore, it is visible that the inclusion of the Bill of Rights into the U.S. Constitution enabled the country to have a new constitution. On the other hand, the Bill of Rights had the long-term consequence of protecting people's rights from infringement by the central government. It made it impossible for the government to undertake particular activities, such as taking away the freedom of religion and speech. Therefore, the Bill of Rights has had both long-term and short-term benefits for U.S. citizens.

References

Library of Congress. (n.d.). The Bill of Rights: A transcription.

<https://www.archives.gov/founding-docs/bill-of-rights-transcript>

U.S. Const. amend. I. <https://constitution.congress.gov/constitution/amendment-1/>