

Virginia Plan

proposed on May 29, 1787

This plan was also known as the “Randolph Resolution,” since it was proposed by Edmund Randolph of the Virginia Delegation on May 29, 1787. Randolph’s recommendations are summarized below.

Legislative

A bicameral (two-house) legislature based either on states’ population or on states’ contributions to the central government.

Lower house to be elected by popular vote.

Upper house to be chosen from lists provided by state legislatures to the lower house. Congress would also have the power to legislate where “the separate States are incompetent” or where “the harmony of the U.S. may be interrupted by the exercise of individual legislation.”

Executive

A national executive would have “a general authority to execute the national laws.”

Judicial

Consisting of “one or more supreme tribunals [courts] and of inferior tribunals.”

Jurisdiction over “admiralty, diversity of citizenship cases, cases involving collection of the national revenues, impeachment of national officers and questions which involve the national peace and harmony.” (Smith 38)

New Jersey Plan

proposed on June 15, 1787

This plan was also known as the “Paterson Resolution,” since it was proposed by delegate William Paterson of New Jersey. His proposals are summarized below.

Legislative

Legislature to be unicameral.

Each state to be equally represented as in the Articles of Confederation.

Legislative powers to be broadened to include regulation of foreign and interstate trade, as well as the right to levy import taxes and postal fees.

Executive

“Plural Executive” to be chosen by Congress; such “Executive” could be removed by Congress at the request of a majority of the governors of the states.

Executive to have power to appoint federal officials and to direct military operations.

Judicial

To consist of a single supreme tribunal (court).

Each state in the Union must abide by all the laws and treaties of the United States.

(Smith 39)

Connecticut Compromise

proposed on July 5, 1787

This plan was also known as “The Great Compromise.” It was proposed by the Compromise Committee composed, in part, of the Connecticut delegation. Its purpose was to offer a compromise between the Virginia and New Jersey Plans. The compromise is outlined below:

Congress to be bicameral.

The lower house to be composed of members according to **popular representation.**

The upper house to have **equal representation for each state.**

All spending bills to be **originated in the lower house.**