

The Radicals and the Conservatives both had valid argument in the post-revolutionary period. Argue one point of view and support your ideas with issues of the times.

In the midst of celebrating their recent liberation, America's brightest minds were buzzing with new ideas for her government. The fiery, independent spirit of America was still raw enough to chafe at the plans of strong centralized government, and was leery of assigning carte blanche to a head of state. On the other hand, some argued that a strong central government was exactly what America needed to pull through the post-war period intact. From these two trains of thought arose two parties: the Radicals and the Conservatives. Although both had valid arguments, the Radical's ideas of state government in favor of federal government, civil liberties over federal law, and leaders of state rather than a strong, central head, were best suited to the growing independence and need for flexibility among the states of America. Although the Conservatives ideas might've benefited America by providing more stability, it is unlikely that this form of Imperial government would've been welcomed by the recently liberated people. The Radicals were spearheaded by figures like Thomas Jefferson, who believed that America should be an agrarian democracy ruled by the yeomen farmer, while leaders such as George Washington and John Adams led the Conservative side.

In order to understand why the Radical's plan for America's new government was best at the time, it's important to note the tense climate that America emerged from the war with. Having recently escaped from the clutches of imperial England, an attempt to implement a government that held to some of the same ideas would not have been met happily by most of the population. For the most part, Americans viewed England as a dominating government of unchecked power, and were afraid that they might become the same thing. The Conservative's plan to implement laws that treated citizens as individuals of a nation, and not just states, was too much centralized power for the political climate to handle. So first and foremost, the Radical's plan, that of a true Democracy, was, if nothing else, the option that put them farthest from England's imperialism.

Secondly, the Radical's ideas provided more flexibility and independence for the states. Although the states had banded together in order to win the war, their ideas where far from harmonizing with each other, and an attempt to band them together immediately following the chaos of the war might've been disastrous. The idea that each state should govern themselves rather than follow a strong national power was the linchpin to this new Democracy, and provided America with the flexibility it needed to function in the aftermath of the Revolution.

Lastly, the Radical's were providing a government that all citizens could enjoy: a Democracy. In theory, everyone had the chance to participate (and those who didn't wish to didn't have to) and were not required to bend at the waist to a head of state. This kind of freedom greatly complemented the spirit of individualism surging through America, and while the Radical's democracy might not have lasted long, it was implemented at the proper time, and allowed to ride the rush of euphoria following the war.

Therefore, it was the Radical's theory that America should be ruled not by great heads of state or a strong federal government, but rather the yeomen farmer working in harmony with a democratic system that greatly contributed to and complemented the growing independence of America.