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THE BRITISH AND THE AMERICAN POLITICAL SYSTEM

SIMILARITIES AND DIFFERENCES

A Dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirement for the
Master Degree in British Civilization

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Dedication

I would appreciate the almighty merciful God for his blesses and his wisdom guidance for me in my entire life .

**If i used all the existing words , it would not express how much I am grateful and appreciate for my parents which were the pillars of what i became today ,
Thanks for your scarification and your unconditional support.**

I have a special dedication for the biggest absent today my Grandmother Zohra which was the light of my life, despite of she never get any education , but she was a wisdom teacher, a lover mother, and unforgettable person may you rest in peace .

An exceptional dedication for all my lovelly friends : Toumi , abdelwaheb , imad , abdellatife, reda , houari,nadjib, abderezak , djihad, nasira and the absent dear safir , And of course to the special Teacher Aissa chaabane. I had the great honor for being a part of your lives.

My special brothers and sister, my uncles and tent my cousins, my Grandfather and my grandmother , thank you for your support .

The big special my brother bachir who shared me all my optimist and depression moments thanks for being the brother that everyone dream of .

And to the soldiers of the shadow , I Would never be who I am today without your scarification , a warm thanks and appreciation for all my Great Teachers.

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Abstract

This work is going to deal with two political systems of two major countries in the world, which are Great Britain and the United States of America, and what are similarities and differences between the two political systems.

In the first chapter we will introduce you the British political system, starting from the unwritten constitution, to the judicial system in the country, and during this journey we will discover also what are; The British Monarchy, The Three Arms of the political system in Great Britain, Elections and Political Parties in Great Britain, how it runs, and who are the dominant parties in the country, then we will move to the British Parliament and from what it composes and how does it work, then we'll move to the executive branch in the country and put the light on it and know the combination of it and what are its authorities.

In the second chapter we are going to move to the second part of the world and this work, to America, where we are going to deal with its political system. Starting from the supreme document in the country "The Constitution" moving to the separation of power in the country between "legislative, executive, judicial" and what are the components of each branch, and how does it work. Then we'll move to take a little vision on the competition between the two big rival parties in the country.

And finally in the third chapter we will make a comparison between the two political systems to see and discover what are similarities and differences between the two, and we'll come to that by making a comparison between constitutions in both countries, then to make a comparison between each branch in the political system in the two countries.

Introduction :

In this chapter we will make a comparison between The British and the American political system , and what are the similarities and differences between the two political system .

1. Comparison between the British and the American constitution :

The most important fact we should know is that Britain has not been invaded for almost 1000 years , and this explains why Britain has no Written Constitution, and placed in one single document. Rather ,it is the product of many elements : statutory law , common law , custom and convention, the British bill of rights , and recently treaties with the European union.

The constitution of the United States on the contrary to the British one is written in a single document, the Constitution established America's national government and fundamental laws, and guaranteed certain basic to the Constitutional Convention in Philadelphia.

The differences between the two countries in the form of constitution does not reflected on the function. In both Countries the Constitution is the Supreme law .

2. Comparison between The British monarchy political system and the American presidential system:

In Great Britain The Monarch is the head of the political life , Government ministers , and officials members of parliament are monarch's servant. Judges , military officers , peers , and bishops of the church of England swear allegiance to the crown . in Great Britain they introduce the executive branch as their Majesty's Government .

In the united State things are quite different the president is on the top of the political life in the country.

3. Comparison between the three arms of political system “ legislative , executive , judiciary “ in UK and U.S.A

The British political system is divided into three arms , which are headed by the British Monarchy.

The three arms of the British political system are:

1- **The legislature**: the elected body that passes new laws which means the parliament with its two chambers the House of Commons and the House of Lords.

2- **The Executive**: the cabinet, the civil service and the Prime Minister who run the country and proposed new laws.

3- **The Judiciary**: The law, the judges, courts House of Lords which ensures that every one obey the laws.

In the United States of America , things are similar of that in Great Britain , with a very small difference presented in the headed of the Monarch above all the three arms . we find in The United State of America the political seen divided into three arms :

1- **The legislature branch** : which is the Congress by its two chambers , its duties granted by the first law in American Constitution :“All legislative powers here in granted shall be vested in a Congress of the United States, which shall consist of a Senate and House of Representatives”.

2- **The executive branch** :is as the press named them “ people in D.C “ , and mean by that the President of United State , Vice President, and the ministers which they form the Cabinet. And they are responsible of executing laws .

3- **The judiciary** :or as they prefer to call it in The United State” the safe guard of liberty”. headed by the Supreme court which tops all federal and state jurisdictions . This branch make sure on applying laws .and is free of the executive and legislate branch .

In this point there is a sub-complete similarity between the British and the American system. Both have ;**legislative ,executive, judiciary** branch . and the whole three does not interfere in each one business.

4. Political Parties and Comparison between The Two Party system in UK and U.S.A :

A political party is a group of dedicated people who come together to win elections , operate the government, and determine public policy.

In UK The electoral structure depends upon the two party political system , the conservatives and labours which represent the two important and major parties in the United Kingdom . In addition to the Liberal Democratic Party and other small parties.

The same thing in the United State the Congress is dominated by the two Major Parties , The Republican and The Democratic party . since the American Civil War, although other parties have also existed.

At this point the American and the British political system are similar, and we can assume that the Americans has herited this from the British .

5. Comparison between The British and the American Government and its branches:

The British and the American governments are different in composition, and are not similar in combination at all.

Great Britain has a unitary government. Its Parliament has ultimate authority over all things that occur within the United Kingdom. Even it delegates power over local matters, Parliament can require its towns or counties to do whatever it seems appropriate; it can even abolish them or change their boundaries if it chooses to do so. The British government is formed by the party with majority support in the commons. the Queen nominate the Prime Minister. The cabinet run the country and it is responsible for the parliament at the same time.. There is in Britain local authorities "Government" that is responsible for such matters as administrating education, public transport and managing public spaces. In England most counties, cities and towns each have their own councils, as do parishes at a local level.

The American government is based on the principle of federalism, in which power is shared between the federal government and state governments. The United States of America composed of fifty states. In the United State, the situation is quite different. Laws of the national government, located in Washington, D.C. apply to any individual who lives within the national boundaries, while laws in each of the 50 states apply to residents of those states alone. Under the U.S constitution, Congress does not have the power to abolish a state nor can a state assume a power intended for the national government alone.

6. Conclusion :

There are lot of similarities in form and combination between the British and the American political system , and also there are differences in function.

The former colony of the British Crown has herited political tradition that helped it in building a strong and powerful political system which dominate the world nowadays .

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The British political system

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Introduction:

The United Kingdom is a unitary state with devolution, is governed within the framework of a parliamentary democracy under a constitutional monarchy, in which the monarch, currently Queen Elizabeth II, is the head of state and the prime minister of the United Kingdom, currently Theresa May, is the head of government. Executive power is exercised by the British government, on behalf of and by the consent of the monarch, as well as by the devolved governments of Scotland and Wales, and the Northern Ireland Executive. Legislative power is vested in the two chambers of the Parliament of the United Kingdom, the House of Commons and the House of Lords, as well as in the Scottish parliament and Welsh and Northern Ireland assemblies. The judiciary is independent of the executive and the legislature. The highest court is the Supreme Court of the United Kingdom. The growing power of parliament against the monarch in the 17th century was reflected on the development of more organized political parties. This feature was to characterize the future of the British two-party political system, in which political power has shifted between two major parties. The UK political system is a multi-party system. Since the 1920s, the two largest political parties have been the Conservative Party and the Labour Party. Before the Labour Party rose in British politics, the Liberal Party was the other major political party along with the Conservatives.

1) The unwritten Constitution:

Great Britain's constitution is not placed in one single document. Rather, it is the product of many elements: statutory law, common law, custom and convention, charters of Magna Carta and the English Bill of Rights and recently the treaties with the European Union and The Commonwealth League of Nations. The most important aspect of the British constitution is the sovereignty of parliament.

2) The British Monarchy:

The Monarchy is the oldest form of government in the United Kingdom. In a monarchy, a king or queen is Head of State. The British monarchy is known as a constitutional monarchy. This means that, while the Sovereign is Head of State, the ability to make and pass legislation resides with an elected Parliament. • Although the British Sovereign no longer has a political or executive role, he or she continues to play an important part in the life of the nation. • As Head of State, the Monarch undertakes constitutional and representational duties which have developed over one thousand years of history. In addition to these State duties, the Monarch has a less formal role as 'Head of Nation'. The Sovereign acts as a focus for national identity, unity and pride; gives a sense of stability and continuity; officially recognizes success and excellence; and supports the ideal of voluntary service. • In all these roles the Sovereign is supported by members of their immediate family.

The monarch has several roles and duties in the United Kingdom, those aspects are represented in :

The Monarch and Government • As Head of State the Queen has to remain strictly neutral with respect to political matters, unable to vote or stand for election. But the Queen does have important ceremonial and formal roles in relation to the Government of the UK.

The Queen as Sovereign is Head of the Armed Forces.

The Monarch is the head of the Anglican Church, Queen and the Church in the United Kingdom, the Queen's title includes the words 'Defender of the Faith'. This means Her Majesty has a specific role in both the Church of England and the Church of Scotland. As established Churches, they are recognised by law as the official Churches of England and

Scotland, respectively. In both England and Scotland, the established Churches are subject to the regulation of law. The principle of religious toleration is fully recognised both for those of other creeds and for those without any religious beliefs. There are no established Churches in Northern Ireland nor in Wales.

The Queen and the Commonwealth • From Australia to Antigua, Canada to Cameroon, the Commonwealth is a remarkable international organization , spanning every geographical region, religion and culture. It exists to foster international cooperation and trade links between people all over the world. The Queen is Sovereign of 15 Commonwealth realms in addition to the UK. She is also Head of the Commonwealth itself, a voluntary association of 54 independent countries.

The monarch has also symbolic duties , the King or the Queen has to give a Royal assent for parliament bills and decisions , the monarch appoint officers , judges , ambassadors...ect .

The Monarch meets the British Prime Minister once per week to keep her in touch with internal and external affairs that concerns the country , and the Prime Minister can ask for per of advice from the head of the Monarchy .

3. The Three Arms of the political system in Great Britain

The British political system is divided into three arms , which are headed by the British Monarchy.

The three arms of the British political system are:

- 1- **The legislature:** the elected body that passes new laws which means the parliament with its two chambers the House of Commons and the House of Lords.
- 2- **The Executive:** the cabinet, the civil service and the Prime Minister who run the country and proposed new laws.
- 3- **The Judiciary:** The law, the judges, courts House of Lords which ensures that every one obey the laws.

4) Elections, and Political Parties:

4.1 Elections in United Kingdom:

Britain is divided for Westminster parliamentary electoral purposes into 659 constituencies, each having an average of about 66000 electors. The voters become members of the House of Commons at a general election.

General elections are by secret Ballot today any one aged 18 and above can vote. The candidates must be British, or citizens of the Republic of Ireland or of a Commonwealth country, residents in the United Kingdom and aged at least 21.

The British electoral system is seen as undemocratic and unfair to smaller parties. The two big parties (Labour and Conservative) have preferred the existing system, since it allows them to have majority of seats in the Commons ,so it gives them a greater chance of having the power.

4.2 Political Parties:

The electoral structure depends upon the two party political system , the conservatives and labours which represent the two important and major parties in the United Kingdom. In addition to the Liberal Democratic Party and other small parties.

4.2.1 The conservative party:

Conservative Party (also known as Tories) is the oldest political party in the United Kingdom, and arguably the world.

The conservative party , officially the Conservative and Unionist Party , is a political party in the United Kingdom . It is currently the governing party , having won a majority of seats in the House of Commons at the 2015 general election . The party's leader , Theresa May , is currently serving as Prime Minister . It is the largest party in local government with 8,702 councilors . The Conservative party is one of the two major party contemporary political parties in the United Kingdom , the other being its modern rival , the Labour party , the Conservative party's platform involves support for free market capitalism , free enterprise ,

fiscal conservatism , a strong national defence , deregulation , and restrictions on labour unions .

Sir Robert Peel, twice Prime Minister of the United Kingdom and founder of the Conservative Party as well as the 'most considered' first Prime Minister of the UK . The Conservative Party was founded from the Tory Party. The term "Conservative" was suggested as a title for the party by a magazine article by J. Wilson Croker in the Quarterly Review in 1830. the name immediately caught on and was officially adopted under the aegis of Sir Robert Peel around 1834.

The Conservative Party was one of the two dominant parties in United Kingdom in the Nineteenth Century , along with the Labourparty.

In 1920 , the liberal vote greatly diminished and the party became conservatives ' rivals. Conservative Prime Ministers led government for 57 years of the twentieth century , including Winston Churchill (1940-1945) , and Margaret Thatcher (1970-1990). In the 1945 general election the party lost power in a landslide to the Labourparty .

After the end of the Second World War, the Conservatives accepted the reality of the Labour government's nationalization programme, the creation of the 'welfare state', and the taxes required for it. But when they returned to power in 1951 the party oversaw an economic boom and ever-increasing national prosperity throughout the 1950s. The party stumbled in the 1960s and 1970s, but in 1975 Margaret Thatcher became leader and converted it to a monetarist economic programme; after her election victory in 1979 her government became known for its free market approach to problems and privatisation of public utilities. Here, the Conservatives experienced a high-point, Thatcher leading the Conservatives to two more landslide election victories in 1983 and 1987.

However, towards the end of the 1980s, Thatcher's increasing unpopularity and unwillingness to change policies perceived as vote-losing led to her being deposed in 1990 and replaced by John Major who won an unexpected election victory in 1992. Major's government suffered a political blow when the Pound Sterling was forced out of the Exchange Rate Mechanism later that year, which lost the party much of its reputation for good financial stewardship. Although the country's economy recovered in the mid-1990s, an

effective opposition campaign by the Labour Party led to a landslide defeat in 1997. The party returned to government in a coalition under David Cameron following the 2010 general election. In the 2015 General Election the Conservatives managed to win a majority and saw David Cameron return to power for a second term.

The Conservative party domination of the British politics throughout the twentieth century has led them to being referred as one of the most successful political parties in the Western World .

4.2.2 The Labour Party:

The Labour Party is a centre-left political party in the United Kingdom. Growing out of the trade union movement and socialist parties of the nineteenth century, the Labour Party has been described as a big tent, encompassing a diversity of ideological trends from strongly socialist to moderately social democratic. Founded in 1900, the Labour Party overtook the Liberal Party as the main opposition to the Conservative Party in the early 1920s, forming minority governments under Ramsay MacDonald in 1924 and from 1929 to 1931. Labour later served in the wartime coalition from 1940 to 1945, after which it formed a majority government under Clement Attlee. Labour was also in government from 1964 to 1970 under Harold Wilson and from 1974 to 1979, first under Wilson and then James Callaghan. The Labour Party was last in government from 1997 to 2010 under Tony Blair and Gordon Brown, beginning with a landslide majority of 179, reduced to 167 in 2001 and 66 in 2005. Having won 232 seats in the 2015 general election, the party is the Official Opposition in the Parliament of the United Kingdom. The Labour Party is the largest party in the Welsh Assembly, the third largest party in the Scottish Parliament and has twenty MEPs in the European Parliament, sitting in the Socialists and Democrats Group. The party also organises in Northern Ireland, but does not contest elections to the Northern Ireland Assembly. The Labour Party is a full member of the Party of European Socialists and Progressive Alliance, and holds observer status in the Socialist International. In September 2015, Jeremy Corbyn was elected Leader of the Labour Party.

5- The British Parliament:

The Parliament of the United Kingdom, commonly known as the UK Parliament or British Parliament, is the supreme legislative body in the United Kingdom, British Crown dependencies

and British overseas territories. It alone possesses legislative supremacy and thereby ultimate power over all other political bodies in the UK and its territories. Its head is the Sovereign of the United Kingdom (currently Queen Elizabeth II) and its seat is the Palace of Westminster in the City of Westminster, one of the boroughs of the British capital, London.

The parliament is bicameral, consisting of an upper house (the House of Lords) and a lower house (the House of Commons). The Sovereign forms the third component of the legislature (the Queen-in-Parliament). The House of Lords includes two different types of members: the Lords Spiritual, consisting of the most senior bishops of the Church of England, and the Lords Temporal, consisting mainly of life peers, appointed by the Sovereign on the advice of the Prime Minister] and of 92 hereditary peers, sitting either by virtue of holding a royal office, or by being elected by their fellow hereditary peers. Prior to the opening of the Supreme Court in October 2009, the House of Lords also performed a judicial role through the Law Lords.

The Parliament of Great Britain was formed in 1707 following the ratification of the Treaty of Union by Acts of Union passed by the Parliament of England and the Parliament of Scotland. At the start of the 19th century, Parliament was further enlarged by Acts of Union ratified by the Parliament of Great Britain and the Parliament of Ireland that abolished the latter and added 100 Irish MPs and 32 Lords to the former to create the Parliament of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland. The Royal and Parliamentary Titles Act 1927 formally amended the name to the "Parliament of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland", five years after the secession of the Irish Free State.

The UK parliament and its institutions have set the pattern for many democracies throughout the world, and it has been called "the mother of parliaments".

Parliament consists of three parts: the House of Commons, the House of Lords and the Monarch. The balance of power between these three parts has changed over the centuries. In the House of Commons there are 650 MPs who are elected by people throughout the UK to represent their interests and concerns. The House of Commons has the final say on laws introduced in Parliament. The House of Lords is the second Chamber of the UK Parliament. It has around 800 members, most of them life peers, appointed because they have had a distinguished career or

have made a significant contribution to British life. The Lords works independently of the Commons but the two Houses share the task of making laws and checking and challenging the work of the Government. The Monarch's role is largely formal. It includes approving laws, appointing life peers, and announcing the Government's plans for the year ahead at the State Opening ceremony. The story of Parliament is central to the story of democracy in the UK. This leaflet describes some of the milestones and dramatic events that have shaped, and continue to shape, life in the UK.

5.1 The House of Lords:

The House of Lords consists of the Lords Spiritual and the Lords Temporal. The Lords Spiritual are the Archbishops of York and Canterbury and 24 senior bishops of the Church of England.

The House of Lords functions as an experienced and less partisan forum than the House of Commons Powers and functions of the upper house are limited and they are as follows:

-Legislative Delay: The House of Lords can block government legislation (passage of a bill) for one year and with exception of financial Bills due to the Parliamentary Act of 1911 and the one of 1949.

-Revision of Bills: the lord has an important revising of Bills drafted by the commons, and it is usually to amend or clarify and improve the test of Bills in order to avoid problems of interpretation later on.

-Judicial Functions: the House of Lords serve as final court of appeal to consider important points of law.

5.2 The House of Commons:

The House of Commons is the elected chamber of parliament and the major legislative and debating body in the United Kingdom.

The powers of the House of Commons have gradually increased over the centuries, thus the supremacy of the commons was definitely established after the 17th century revolution and was confirmed by two of the most important documents in the constitutional history of Britain, the Bills of rights in 1689.

There are 659 members of parliament in the House of Commons, 117 of them are women which are selected as parliamentary candidates.

The person who chairs the debates in the House of Commons is the speaker who is appointed by the prime minister and who must have the support of the majority of the House of Commons. Once being the commons speaker, he becomes strictly neutral, and takes no part in debates or votes.

Each sitting in the House of Commons, starts with a psalm and prayers, then comes question time which lasts one hour (when the ministers are asked questions), followed by the discussion of bills, then the House votes.

The Lower's house functions are:

-The representation of the interests: Members of parliament represent the interests of their constituencies members without regarding to the party they belong to. Discussing and voting on legislation: Members of parliament check and debate all proposed legislation, often suggestion amendments to it.

-Control of the Executive: Ministers are accountable to parliament during the question time and debates, when they must answer all questions and explain their policies.

5.3 Legislative proceedings:

The Westminster parliament is the responsible of the creation and the changes of laws, this means the implementation of the government's policies. A government usually issue certain documents before the beginning of the parliamentary legislative process. A green or white paper is published. A green paper is a consultative document that allows interested parties to state their case before a bill is introduced into parliament. Bills must pass through both houses and then receive the Royal Assent before they can become a law.

5.4 Sovereignty of the parliament:

The British Parliament is Sovereign and its powers has often been undermined by its own acts, and it is not under rule or control of any institution whether the executive, judicial nor the Monarchy institution.

6. The Government in Great Britain and its branches

The government is formed by the party with majority support in the commons. The British government is mainly centered on the White Hall in London where its ministries and the Prime Minister's official residence (10 Downing Street) are located. The Queen appoints the leader head of the government, for all practical purposes this role falls to the Prime Minister of the party with majority in the commons as Prime Minister. Although the Queen nominate the Prime Minister.

6.1 The prime Minister:

The Prime Minister of the United Kingdom is the head of Her Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom. The prime minister (informal abbreviation: PM) and Cabinet (consisting of all the most senior ministers, most of whom are government department heads) are collectively accountable for their policies and actions to the Monarch, to Parliament, to their political party and ultimately to the electorate. The office is one of the Great Offices of State. The current prime minister, Theresa May, leader of the Conservative Party, was appointed by the Queen on 13 July 2016. The office is not established by any constitution or law but exists only by long-established convention, which stipulates that the monarch must appoint as prime minister the person most likely to command the confidence of the House of Commons, this individual is typically the leader of the political party or coalition of parties that holds the largest number of seats in that chamber. The position of Prime Minister was not created; it evolved slowly and erratically over three hundred years due to numerous acts of Parliament, political developments, and accidents of history. The office is therefore best understood from a historical perspective. The origins of the position are found in constitutional changes that occurred during the Revolutionary Settlement (1688–1720) and the resulting shift of political power from the Sovereign to Parliament. Although the Sovereign was not stripped of the ancient prerogative powers and legally remained the head of government, politically it gradually became necessary for him or her to govern through a Prime Minister who could command a majority in Parliament. By

The 1830s the Westminster system of government (or cabinet government) had emerged; the Prime Minister had become *primus inter pares* or the first among equals in the Cabinet and the head of government in the United Kingdom. The political position of Prime Minister was enhanced by the development of modern political parties, the introduction of mass communication (inexpensive newspapers, radio, television and the internet), and photography. By the start of the 20th century the modern premiership had emerged; the office had become the pre-eminent position in the constitutional hierarchy vis-à-vis the Sovereign, Parliament and Cabinet. The British Prime Minister should be accountable for the parliament for the following functions:

- (a) To determine the policies of the United Kingdom ;

- (b) To communicate the policies of the United Kingdom government ;
- (c) To execute the policies of the United Kingdom policies ;
- (d) To decide which measures represent the legislative programme of the United Kingdom government :
- (e) To decide on the level and application of taxation within the United Kingdom and the objects of public spending ;
- (f) To appoint the ministers of the United Kingdom government and determine their responsibilities , provide that for each department state he shall appoint as a minister at least one member of parliament .
- (g) To decide whether to declare war .
- (h) To decide whether to declare state of emergency .
- (i) To appoint the permanent heads of government departments ; the members of Defence staff , and the head of security services .

6.2 Local Government:

Local authorities are responsible for such matters as administering education, public transport and managing public spaces. In England most counties, cities and towns each have their own councils, as do parishes at a local level.

The organization of local government in England is complex, with the distribution of functions varying according to local arrangements.

- Local government in Scotland is divided on the basis of 32 council areas with the wide variation in the both size and population.
- Local government in Wales consists of 22 unitary authorities , including the cities of Cardiff, Swansea and new port, which are separate unitary authorities in their own right.
- Local government in Northern Ireland has, since 1973, been organized into 26 district councils, each elected by single transferable vote with powers limited to services like collecting waste controlling dogs, and maintaining parks and cemeteries.

7- The Judicial system in Britain:

Britain does not have a common single legal system. But, there are three separate elements ,those of England and Wales, Scotland, and Northern Ireland. These three elements differ from each other in their procedures, legal professions and courts.

The British court cases are divided into civil and criminal law:

Civil law is concerned mostly with disputes between individuals or corporate bodies. Criminal law is concerned with establishing and maintaining social order and protecting the community. The rules of criminal law are intended to encourage and support safe and orderly living for everyone .

Conclusion:

Great Britain is a constitutional monarchy. The constitution exists in no one document. The hereditary monarch, who must belong to the Church of England according to the Act of Settlement of 1701, is almost entirely limited to exercising ceremonial functions as the head of state.

Sovereignty rests in parliament ,which consists of the House of Commons, the House of Lords, and the crown. Effective power resides in the Commons, whose 646 members are elected from single-member constituencies. The executive cabinet of ministers headed by the prime minister, who is the head of government _ is usually drawn from the party holding the most seats in the Commons .

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Introduction

The American political system has began as an experiment in liberty and democracy in 1776, the United States is more accurately defined as a constitutional federal republic. Constitutional refers to the fact that government in the United State is based on the ultimate power within the American system rests with the people. This power is exercised through regular scheduled elections in which voters select the President, memebbers of Congress, and various state and local officials. These officials and their staffs formulate policy. Make laws. And direct the day-to-day operations of government.

The US Government was founded upon the following principles: popular Sovereignty, Limited Government Separation of powers, Checks and Balances Judicial Review, and Federalism. The Executive branch is headed by the president and is independent of the legislature. Legislative power is vested in the two chambers of Congress, the senate and the House of Representatives. Judicial power is exercised by the Judicial branch (or judiciary), composed of the Supreme Court and lower federal courts. The judiciary's function is to interpret the United states Constitution as well as federal laws and regulations. This includes resolving disputes between the Executive and Legislative branches. The federal government of the United States was established by the constitution. American politics has been dominated by two parties, the Democratic Party and the Republic Party, since the American Civil War, although other parties have also existed.

1. The American Constitution:

The United States Constitution is the supreme law of the United States of America. The U.S. Constitution established America's national government and fundamental laws, and guaranteed certain basic rights for its citizens. It was signed on September 17, 1787, by delegates to the Constitutional Convention in Philadelphia, presided over by George Washington. Under America's first governing document, the Articles of Confederation, the national government was weak and states operated like independent countries. At the 1787 convention, delegates devised a plan for a

stronger federal government with three branches—executive, legislative and judicial—along with a system of checks and balances to ensure no single branch would have

too much power. The Bill of Rights—10 amendments guaranteeing basic individual protections such as freedom of speech and religion—became part of the Constitution

in 1791. To date, there have been a total of 27 constitutional amendments.

1.1 Debating the Constitution:

Delegates had been charged by Congress amending the Articles of Confederation. After intense debate, which continued throughout the summer of 1787, they developed a plan that established three branches of government national executive, legislative and judicial. A system of checks and balances was in place to ensure that no single branch would have too much authority. The powers and specific responsibilities of each branch have also been built.

Delegates of the largest states wanted people to determine how many representatives a state could send to Congress, while small states have called for equal representation. The problem was solved by compromise of Connecticut, who proposed a bicameral system with proportional representation of states in the lower house (House of Representatives) and equal representation in the upper house (Senate).

Another controversial issue was slavery. Although some Northern states had already begun to ban the practice, they went with the insistence of the southern states that slavery was an issue for individual states to decide and should be kept out of the Constitution. Many delegates believed that north without accepting this , the South would not join the Union.

For tax purposes and to determine how many representatives a state could send to Congress, it was decided that slaves would be recognized in three-fifths of a person. In addition, it was agreed that the Congress would not be authorized to prohibit the slave trade before 1808 and States were obliged to return fugitive slaves to their owners.

2. Separation of Powers:

The Constitution separates the government's powers among three branches: Legislative, executive, and judicial. Under the separation of powers plan, each branch has its own job and powers.

2.1 The Legislative Branch:

Article one of the constitution grants all legislative powers of the federal government to a congress: "All legislative powers herein granted shall be vested in a Congress of the United States, which shall consist of a Senate and House of Representatives"¹.

Congress is a bicameral legislature. This means it is a legislature divided into two chambers or houses, the Senate and the House of Representatives. The Senate is composed of two members from each state. Membership in the House of Representatives is based on population and its size is therefore not specified in the Constitution². Both the House of Representatives and the senate meet for the same two-year-term.

The most important role of the legislative branch is to make law. Before it is voted, a law is referred to as a bill. In order for a bill to become an act, it must be discussed in a committee during sessions called hearing, after which it can be sent to the floor of the House of Representatives where a simple majority of votes is required for it to pass. The Bill then goes through a similar process in the Senate, and is finally sent to the President who can either

¹Ibid.68

²House of representative is one of the two houses of the US congress (a bicameral legislative). It is frequently referred to as a house, the other house is the Senate.

sign it or send it back to Congress which must pass it by a two third majority in both houses in order to override the veto. The President can also use his veto: if the Congress terminates its sessions during the ten- day period during which the President was supposed to notify his agreement, the bill becomes null and void³.

2.2. The Executive Branch:

The second article of the Constitution vests the executive power in the President. It also provides for the office of vice-president. The President, assisted by the Vice-President is surrounded by a team of experts who advice and counsel him on all matters, foreign and domestic affairs of the nation. Abraham Lincoln⁴ points out “The chief magistrate derives all this authority from the people....”⁵.

The executive Branch is made up of thirteen Executive Departments and many agencies. Each of the departments is headed by a secretary appointed by the president with the Senate’s approval. These secretaries, along with the Vice-President and several other top officials make up the President’s cabinet.⁶

The Cabinet is an advisory group that helps the President in making decisions and setting government policy. The idea of a cabinet as a group of advisers to the president began with George Washington⁷. Cabinet meetings take place in the cabinet room of the White House⁸and are usually closed to the public news media

2.3The Judicial Branch

³Ibid

⁴Abraham Lincoln(1809-1865) the 16th US president

⁵Ibid 98

⁶Member of president cabinet as his official advisory group and head the executive department

⁷George Washington(1731-1799) was the 1st president of the US (1789-1797)

⁸White House is the official residence and principal work place of the president of the US, located in Washington. it has been the residence of every US president since John Adams 1800.

“..... The judiciary is the safeguard our liberty and of our property under the constitution”.
Charles Evans Hughes speech,1907⁹.

The third branch of the American government is the judicial branch, headed by the Supreme Court which tops all federal and state jurisdictions. The federal courts have clearly defined functions. Article three of the constitution states the basis for the federal court system: “ The judicial power of the United States shall be vested in one supreme court and such inferior courts as the congress may from time to time ordain and establish.”

With this guide, the first congress divided the nation into districts and created federal courts for each district. Congress has established a number of lower federal courts and they are of two types: constitutional courts and legislative court¹⁰. The district courts are trial courts that hear both civil and criminal cases. Judge of the federal courts are appointed by the president with the consent of the senate. the Supreme Court is the Highest court of the united states and the only one specifically created by the constitution. This court is the final authority in cases involving the constitution, most of its cases come to it appeals from lower federal courts has nine justices and chief justice and eight Associate justices¹¹. Like other federal judges, they are appointed by the President with the consent of the Senate.

3. The Two Party System

The political parties in the United State of America are political parties in American politics that are dominated by a Two-Party system .By the end of President Washington’s second term in office, two political parties had arisen in congress with strongly opposed views of what the aims of the government should be. One party, which called itself the federalists, was led by Washington’s secretary of the treasury, Alexander Hamilton. The federalists, believed in a strong central government that would encourage the development of

⁹Charles Evans Hughes, speech before the Chamber of the Commerce, Elmina, New York, May 3,1907.

¹⁰R.Remy,op.cit.p.404.

¹¹ Associate Justices: associate Justices of the supreme court of the US are the members o the supreme court of the US other than the Chief Justice of the US.

commerce and manufacturing. They believed that democracy should be ruled by its wealthy and best educated citizens¹².

Those who opposed the federalist were led by Thomas Jefferson¹³ Washington's Secretary of State, and James Madison. Their party came to be known as democratic republicans (the name was often shortened to republicans, but this was often shortened to Republican Party). They represented the views of the common people. They believed that people in an agricultural nation such as the United States had little to gain from the central government's encouragement of industry, as the federalists advocated. The Republicans believed that the nation's welfare would be best served if the states had more power than the central government¹⁴. Several third parties also operate in the U.S politics, and from time to another elect someone to local office, the largest third party since the 1980's is the Libertarian Party.

3.1 The Republican party :

The Republican Party, byname Grand Old Party (GOP), in the United States, one of the two major political parties, the other being the Democratic Party. During the 19th century the Republican Party stood against the extension of slavery to the country's new territories and, ultimately, for slavery's complete abolition. During the 20th and 21st centuries the party came to be associated with laissez-faire capitalism, low taxes, and conservative social policies. The party's official logo, the elephant, is derived from a cartoon by Thomas Nast and also dates from the 1870s. The Republican Party, also commonly called the GOP (for "Grand Old Party"), is one of the world's oldest extant political parties. It is the second. The Party had almost no presence in the Southern United States, but by 1858 in the North it had enlisted former Whigs and former Free Soil Democrats to form majorities in nearly every Northern state. With its election of Abraham Lincoln in 1860, and its success in guiding the Union to victory and abolishing slavery, the party came to dominate the national political scene until 1932. The Republican Party was based on northern white Protestants, businessmen, small business owners, professionals, factory workers, farmers, and African Americans. It was pro-business, supporting banks, the gold standard, railroads, and high tariffs to protect factory workers and grow industry faster. Under William McKinley and

¹²ibid.p.243

¹³ Thomas Jefferson (1743-1826) was the 3rd president of the US, the principle of the declaration of independence 1776.

¹⁴R. Remy, op.cit..p496.

Theodore Roosevelt, it emphasized an expansive foreign policy.

3.2 The Democratic Party :

The Democratic Party is one of the two major contemporary political parties in the United States, along with the Republican Party. Tracing its heritage back to Thomas Jefferson and James Madison's Democratic-Republican Party, the modern-day Democratic Party was founded around 1828 by Andrew Jackson, making it the world's oldest active party . the Democratic-Republican Party began as an anti- federalist group, opposed to strong, centralized government. The party was officially established at a national nominating convention in 1832. It dropped the Republican portion of its name in 1840. The Democratic Party of the late 1990s supports liberal government policies in social and economic matters. The early party disapproved of federal involvement. Jefferson, Madison, and James Monroe—Virginians who were each elected president of the United States—favored limited powers for the national government.

4TheAmerican Government and Its branches :

The United States government is based on the principle of federalism, in which power is shared between the federal government and state governments. The details of American federalism, including what powers the federal government should have and how those powers can be exercised, have been debated ever since the adoption of the Constitution. Some make the case for expansive federal powers while others argue for a more limited role for the central government in relation to individuals, the states or other recognized entities.

4.1 Federal government

The United States of America is a federation of fifty states, it is named a federation due to the applied governing federal system,. Federalism was created by the states which as colonies were established separately and governed themselves independently of the others due to the 16th amendment (1913)¹⁵. In states, the states delegated some powers is shared

¹⁵ibid,p.107

between the national government and the states delegated some powers to the national government and the states, the states delegated some powers to the national government in 1787 but reserved most powers to themselves.¹⁶

4.2 State government

“...those portions of self-government for which they are best qualified ... little republic ...”
Thomas Jefferson letter to John Adams, 1819¹⁷.

State constitutions are important for a number of reasons. First, state constitutions create the structure of state government itself, using the model of the federal government, every state constitution provides for separation of powers. State constitutions outline the organization of each branch, the powers and terms of various offices, as well as the ways in which officers are to be chosen, and specifies the powers and duties of the governor. Second, the state constitution established different type of local government such as counties, townships, municipalities, special districts, parishes and boroughs. Third, they regulate the ways by which money can be raised and spent by state and local government. Fourth, they establish several independent state agencies, boards, commissions that have power in areas that effect citizens live directly¹⁸.

Congress much like Congress. They have a system of leaders and handle legislation through committees. Health, education, and welfare programs together make up the largest part o the activities of the state government¹⁹.

4.3 Local government

¹⁶Daniel, Webster,op.cit.p.58

¹⁷Schroder, R.C.op.cit.p.76

¹⁸R. Remy,op.cit.473

¹⁹G.Theoder.Milton.op.cit.p48

The term "local government" refers to all government below the state level, local government is established by the state and receives their powers from it.

Local government is a form of [public administration](#) which, in a majority of contexts, exists as the lowest tier of administration within a given state. There are four basic types of local government in the United States²⁰.

4.3.1 The county

County government are found in all states except Rhode Island and Connecticut, they supervise elections, issue certain licenses, keep records of vital statistics and administer many services.²¹

All the states are divided into counties or county-equivalents for administrative purposes, although not all counties or county-equivalents have an organized county government. [Connecticut](#) and [Rhode Island](#) have completely eliminated county government, as have portions of [Massachusetts](#). Additionally, a number of [independent cities](#) and [consolidated city-counties](#) operate under a municipal government that serves the functions of both city and county.

In areas lacking a county government, services are provided either by lower level townships or municipalities, or the state.

4.3.2 The Townships

Township governments are organized local governments authorized in the state constitutions and statutes of 20 Northeastern and Midwestern states. The size and powers of townships vary from region to another. In New England²², the township is another name for the town, a fairly small community with a population usually under 5,000. But in a state such as New Jersey and Pennsylvania and throughout the Middle West, a township is a large sub-division of the county. In rural areas, township have recently increased in importance.

²⁰R. Remy, op.cit.505

²¹ Ibid .p.505.

²²Ibid .p.506.

An additional dimension that distinguishes township governments from municipalities is the historical circumstance surrounding their formation. Forexample, towns in New England are also defined by a tradition of local government presided over by [town meetings](#) — assemblies open to all voters to express their opinions on public policy.

4.3.3 The special District

There are more special than any other type of local government, and they deal with a wide variety of special services²³.

4.3.4The Municipality

A municipality is simply a town, borough, city or district that enjoys local self-government .There is great variation in the size and powers of municipalities in the United States²⁴.

²³ibid .p.506.

²⁴ibid .p.506

Conclusion:

The Western political system of government is institutionalized political powers, being Presidential. This system is made up of distinct branches, a legislative, an executive, and a judicial. The government functions, namely, law-making law executing, and law-interpretation, are distributed among these different institutions. The Presidential government features a strict separation of powers. The archetype of Presidential system is the government of the United States of America. The United States government consists of the congress, which is the legislative body, the President, who is the chief commander of the executive agency, and the judicial branch.

Chapter three

Similarities and differences between the British and the American political system

Introduction

- 1 . Comparison between The British and American constitution***
- 2. Comparison between The British monarchy political system and the American presidential system***
- 3. Comparison between the three arms of political system “ legislative , executive , judiciary “ in UK and U.S.A***
- 4. Political Parties and Comparison between The Two Party system in UK and U.S.A***
- 5. Comparison between The British and the American Government and its branches***
- 6. Conclusion***

General conclusion :

This work has put the light on the nature of the British political system and all its components, starting from the Unwritten Constitution of the United Kingdom. Then the British Monarchy; its definition, and how Kings and Queens heretic the Reign. Then we shall put the light on the political life and its components first through the legislative branch which is the British Parliament; where it located, how many MPS it content, its history, its power, its chambers, and also who are the dominant in this parliament. Then we are going to deal with the executive branch the British Government; where it located, what is Government, who is on the Head of it, and what is its function and what are its branches. we are going also put the light on elections in Great Britain, what are political parties?, what is the two party system?, who are the Conservatives?, and who are the Labours?. and we will discover also the third component of political life in Britain, the judicial branch, what is? and what are its branches. then we moved in the second chapter the take a wide look on the American political system, and we start that from the American Constitution, and how did the delegates ratified it and set bills. We are going also talk about the Separation of Power in the United State of America, and who share power in the Country; the Legislative branch represented in the Congress. The executive branch which is the American Government. and the third is Judicial branch. and also we are going to see how the Two Major Parties in the United State compete each other in political life, and identify what is the Two Party System. then we will deep in details and discover the Republican party, its foundation, history, ideology. The we will move to its rival the Democratic party; its foundation, history and also its ideology. Then we will move to see and learn about the American Government and its branches, and in this point we will see what is Federal Government, State Government, and Local Government, and in Local Government we are going to discover its branches also which are the County, the Townships, The Special district, and The Municipality.

In third chapter we made a Comparison between the political system what are the similarities and differences between the British and the American political system. and we will start with a comparison between the British and the American Constitution, then a

comparison between the British monarchy political system and the American presidential system, and then a comparison between the three arms of political life in both Britain and United States .Then a comparison in political parties and the Two Party system in Great Britain and United States. Then we will move to the comparison between the British and American Governments and their branches in both Countries.

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