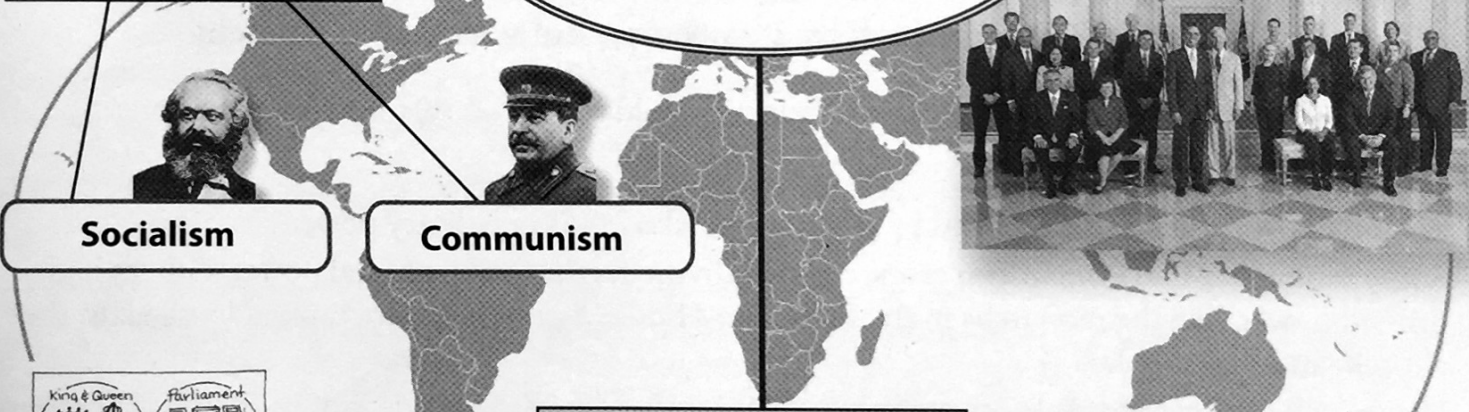


# Types of Governments

Reactions to Industrial Revolution



Socialism

Communism

Who Holds Power

Monarchy

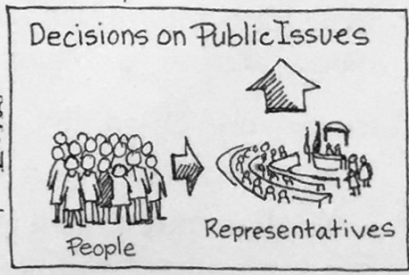
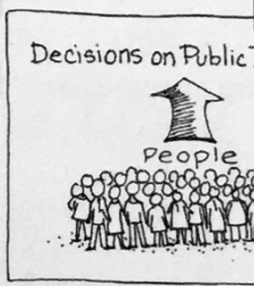
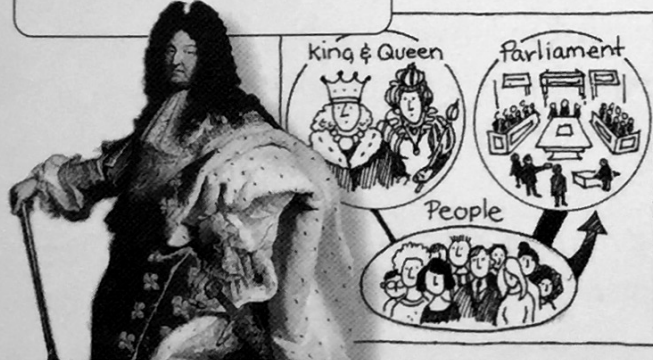
Autocracy

Oligarchy

Democracy

- ▶ Constitutional monarchy
- ▶ Absolute monarchy

- ▶ Direct democracy
- ▶ Representative democracy (Republic)



# Review Cards: Types of Government

## Theories of Government

- ▶ During the Enlightenment, writers developed different theories about the origins of government. One theory was that people had once lived in a **state of nature** with no rules or rulers, but then formed a **social contract** by banding together and forming a **government**.
- ▶ Social scientists today agree that a state of nature never existed, as humans have always needed some sort of government, created by factors such as force, agreement, and religious belief.
- ▶ All governments help communities to cooperate and to develop and enforce rules. They also provide public services and protect the community. The purposes of our own federal government are stated in the Preamble of our Constitution.
- ▶ In addition to our own form of government, there are several other forms of government.

## Who Holds Power? Monarchy, Democracy, Autocracy and Oligarchy

One way to classify governments is by identifying who holds power in that form of government.

### Monarchy

- ▶ A monarchy is a government ruled by one person, who holds hereditary power.
- ▶ Some monarchs, like Roman emperors, claimed divine origins and had total power. Others had limited power, like the monarchs in the European Middle Ages. They were limited by the law, the church, and their nobles.
- ▶ In the 16th century, **absolute monarchs** arose in Europe, like King Louis XIV of France. There was almost no limit to their power. They claimed divine right and their will was law.
- ▶ In Great Britain a **constitutional monarchy** arose when two kings, Charles I and later his son James II, tried to take too much power and were opposed by Parliament. The English Bill of Rights of 1689 kept the monarch as head of state but gave most political power to Parliament. The British monarch today is subject to Britain's "unwritten constitution."

### Democracy

- ▶ The first **democracy** arose in Athens, Greece. All male citizens could participate in government, but women, children, slaves, and foreigners were excluded from political life.
- ▶ **Direct democracy** existed in Athens: citizens directly debated and decided public issues.
- ▶ In larger communities, a **representative democracy (a republic)** is best: citizens elect representatives to vote on their behalf. The United States is a representative democracy.

### Autocracy and Oligarchy

- ▶ In an **autocracy** (like an absolute monarchy or a dictatorship) one ruler holds all political power.
- ▶ In an **oligarchy**, a small group, such as a group of noblemen or the military, hold power.



## The Nation and its Regions: Unitary, Federal and Confederal

Governments can also be classified based on the relationship between their central and local governments.

### Unitary Government

- ▶ A central government holds all power in a **unitary** state. The central government **delegates** certain powers to local governments, but can abolish those local governments at any time. Most nations have unitary governments.

### Federal Government

- ▶ In a **federal government**, the central and local governments exercise independent powers and cannot abolish each other. In the United States, the federal (central) and state governments share power.
- ▶ States often join together to form a federation, but a state cannot leave the federation without the agreement of the other states.

### Confederal Government

- ▶ In a confederation, a group of independent states or nations form an association to cooperate. The majority of power remains with the separate states, which are free to leave at any time.
- ▶ The Articles of Confederation created this type of government in the United States in 1781. The U.S. Constitution then changed the United States from a confederal to a federal system. Another example of a confederation is today's European Union, which consists of various sovereign European governments cooperating with one another.

## How the Branches of Government Relate: Presidential vs. Parliamentary

Another way to classify types of governments is by looking at the relationship between their legislative and executive branches.

### Presidential Government

- ▶ In a **presidential government**, like the United States, the legislative and executive branches are separate. Both are elected by voters for fixed terms.

### Parliamentary Government

- ▶ In a **parliamentary government**, like Great Britain, the elected legislative branch (Parliament) actually controls the executive branch. Parliament elects the head of the executive, the **Prime Minister**, from its own majority party. The Prime Minister and the entire Cabinet are all members of Parliament.
- ▶ There are no fixed terms in office, but Parliament can remove the Prime Minister with a "vote of no confidence." Parliament is re-elected when the Prime Minister calls a general election.

Some governments have both presidential and parliamentary aspects. In France, the president is elected and appoints the prime minister from the majority party in the National Assembly. They share power.

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## Responses to Industrialism: Socialism and Communism

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Socialism and communism were two types of governments that arose in reaction to the ill treatment of workers in the Industrial Revolution. Socialists favor peaceful reforms, while communists believe a social revolution is necessary to achieve genuine change.

### **Socialism**

- ▶ **Socialists** believe that it is the government's job to improve conditions for citizens. Socialist governments establish "welfare states" in which the government takes over some industries and increases taxes in order to provide more services, like free health care and cheaper transportation.
- ▶ Socialist parties gained power in Europe after World War II, but today many socialist policies have been countered by conservative parties.

### **Communism**

- ▶ **Communists** believe that a violent social revolution is necessary in which workers overthrow the rich and abolish private property. Everything would then be owned in common and the government would eventually disappear.
- ▶ In practice, actual communist revolutions, like the Russian Revolution in 1917, resulted in brutal dictatorships.
- ▶ In these states, the Communist Party took over everything and suppressed opposition. A party leader, like Joseph Stalin in Russia and Mao Zedong in China, became dictator. The central government took control of all human and natural resources and owned all property.
- ▶ The Communist Soviet Union collapsed in 1991, but communism still survives in some countries.