


they wrote home to encourage the delegates. Others had a less positive outlook. For example, Patrick Henry, who had been elected as a delegate from Virginia, refused to go. He said he “smelled a rat . . . tending toward monarchy.”

Also, the convention did not reflect the diverse U.S. population of the 1780s. There were no Native Americans, African Americans, or women among the delegates. These groups of people were not recognized as citizens and were not invited to attend. However, the framework of government the Founders established at the Constitutional Convention is the very one that would eventually provide full rights and responsibilities to all Americans.

 **SUMMARIZE** Explain why the United States needed a constitutional convention.

## Some Challenges of the Convention

 **KEY QUESTION** What were some of the major challenges facing the Convention?

By 1787, many Americans realized that people and states often came into conflict and needed a government that could keep order. They wanted a government that was strong enough to protect people’s rights but not so strong that it would oppress them.

**Disagreements over Representation** As the Convention began, the delegates disagreed about what form the new government would take. Two plans emerged. James Madison and the other Virginia delegates had drawn up their plan while they waited for the convention to open. Edmund Randolph presented the plan. The **Virginia Plan** proposed a government with three branches. The **executive branch** would enforce the laws. The **judicial branch** would interpret the laws. The third branch, the **legislative branch**, would create the laws.

The Virginia Plan wanted the legislature to have two sections: an Upper House and a Lower House. In both houses, the number of representatives

| <b>COMPARING</b> <i>Plans for Government</i> |   |   |
|--|---|---|
|  | <b>VIRGINIA PLAN</b>  | <b>NEW JERSEY PLAN</b>  |
| <b>Legislative branch</b>                    | Two (branches) houses: representation determined by state population or wealth<br>Lower House: elected by the people<br>Upper House: elected by lower house | One house: one vote for each state, regardless of size<br>Elected by state legislatures |
| <b>Executive branch</b>                      | Appointed by Legislature  | Appointed by Legislature  |
| <b>Judicial branch</b>                       | Appointed by Legislature  | Appointed by Executive  |

**CRITICAL THINKING Analyze** Which plan appealed more to the smaller states?