



AP Comparative Government & Politics 2000 Student Samples

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The British constitution has a long tradition, dating back to Magna Carta and Common law. Some people have proposed to change ~~the~~ ^{its} constitutional structure. Despite the opposition towards the British constitution, it is still legitimate because it is accepted by the people and has worked successfully over the years. In fact, these proposals are not addressing real problems as it is pointing out discrepancies of opinion. One proposal was to compile the 'constitution' into a single document like the United States constitution. The British constitution, however, is made up of historical documents, unwritten but accepted traditions, and current legislative law. ~~This proposal has not yet been adopted.~~ The fact that the constitution is spread over numerous documents does not call for a ~~any~~ single document. Despite its scattered characteristic, ~~the constitutional and~~ what is and what is not constitutional is widely known by the people and the government.

The British Constitution is very flexible; it is easy to amend through any House legislation. Some have proposed to make the amendment process more difficult because they claim that such flexibility is undesirable. Like the US constitution, an ~~amendment~~ amendment process is much too serious to not be checked on many levels. The British, however, has used this flexibility without any abuse. Flexibility has allowed the parliament to reduce the monarch's power over time, a natural evolutionary process, and called emergency measures in war time. ~~The proposal to make the constitution~~

There are also unwritten portions of the constitution that are considered common law. Such examples are the traditions of Parliament or the courts. There are proposals to address the problem that certain portions are not written. ~~Any~~ ^{Most} legitimate governments have written constitutions so that its principles and laws are not

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violated.

there are many proposals to change the constitutional structure of the British ~~gov~~ in Britain; indeed, the confusing and informal structure could invite some abuses in power. However, because the constitution has evolved over time into its existing ~~kind~~-form, such ~~fears~~ or precautions or fears are unnecessary. Through an informal balance system and wide acceptance, these proposals do not fix any real problem.

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Since the 80's, there have been several proposals to alter the constitutional structure of the United Kingdom. These include autonomy for Scotland, dissolution of the House of Lords, and the removal of the monarchy. Scotland has been a part of England since the Act of Union in 1706. Recently, though, calls have been made for returning control of some matters, such as local laws and schools, back to the Scottish people. This was achieved this year, with the first convening of the new Scottish legislature. This was done to make up for historic wrongs against the Scots.

Another aspect is the dissolution of the House of Lords. The House of Lords is a non-elected body with no real power. It is a throw-back to centuries ago, when the aristocracy dominated government. The dissolution of the House of Lords is designed to make the U.K. a more modern and pure democracy.

Similarly, calls have been made for removal of the monarchy. The monarch has no power and is a throw-back to earlier days. Removing the Queen is designed to make England more modern and democratic.

In the past twenty years the United Kingdom has both adopted and proposed certain changes to their political system of a constitutional ~~monarchy~~ monarchy. Three of the more important ~~or~~ adoptions have been the issue of hereditary peers in the House of Lords, devolution, and writing a Bill of Rights. All three of these have been debated for years ~~but~~ ^{have but have} ~~^~~ came into ~~real~~ real importance when Tony Blair and his Labour Party took over charge of parliament in the ~~late~~ 90s.

The issue of hereditary peers in the the House of Lords has been a question that dates back many years. Hereditary peers are those members of the House of Lords that because of family history are guaranteed a seat in the chamber. The problem was that many argued that this went against democracy and was not fair to those who earned their seats. The issue was resolved recently when it was put into law that the practice of hereditary peers would be outlawed.

The next ~~of~~ issue of importance is that of devolution. The United Kingdom consists of not just England, but also Wales, Scotland and North Ireland. The idea behind devolution is to give each of these regions their own parliament that would be able to govern and regulate domestic problems. This was partly done so that it might put to rest some nationalist feelings in these regions not just to have their own parliament, but also to have

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their independence from the United Kingdom. Tony Blair's gov't granted them devolution and gave them certain powers.

A third proposal that was put into practice was the humanitarian hope to have a Bill of Rights made law in Britain. Most of the principles in the Bill of Rights were already traditions and customs of the British gov't, but the people wanted to have it in writing to guarantee their personal liberties. This also was recently accepted and made law.

These three proposals made adaptations were all considered important and show the success in the British system to get things accomplished. ~~Due~~ Due to the way ^{UK} parliament runs when Tony Blair came in he could expect to get the proposals accepted that he wanted. Since the Glorious Revolution the British have had no uprisings and have been able to achieve things democratically and constitutionally. This shows the marvel of the British Constitutional monarchy.