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 THE HON. FLOYD R. THOMPSON, former Chief Justice of Illinois

Each section, each sentence, each phrase, is explained, showing the reason for, or the situation responsible for the wording. Also given are details of famous cases hinging on the wording.

CONSTITUTION OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

ADOPTED JULY 2, 1788
 IN EFFECT MARCH 4, 1789

THE PREAMBLE

WE THE PEOPLE of the United States,¹

¹ It is important to notice that this is a government of the people, not of the States. Under the Articles of Confederation, in effect as our first form of government from 1781 to 1789, the States as political entities, and not the people, entered into “a firm league of friendship”, each State retaining “its sovereignty, freedom and independence.” The new Constitution brought in a new Nation, deriving its “just powers from the consent of the governed.”

“The people, the highest authority known to our system,” said President Monroe, “from whom all our institutions spring and on whom they depend, formed it.”

“Its language, ‘We the people,’ is the institution of one great consolidated National government of the people of all the States, instead of a government by compact with the States for its agents,” exclaimed Patrick Henry in the Virginia ratifying convention while leading opposition to its adoption. “The people gave the [Constitutional] Convention no power to use their name.” Some States restricted the authority of their delegates to revising the Articles of Confederation. It was claimed that the casting aside of the Articles of Confederation (which

The actual wording of the Constitution is shown in bold face type.

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TO EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS**

LINCOLN MEMORIAL UNIVERSITY, Harrogate, Tenn.
JOHN B. CLARK, Head, Dept. of History and Citizenship

Each student in my government classes has used the text and no book has been of greater service. I hope that every student may have access to a copy. (Later) We are planning a wide distribution of the books (an additional 1,000) and wish we had twice that number. We shall hold a Constitution Day with elaborate program and shall give each student a copy. We are also planning to tie the juniors and seniors in all county high schools into our school of citizenship . . . we have many plans for the development of good citizenship in this county and University and again thank the donor for this aid.

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The books (10,000) already distributed have been well received, but the amount of good accomplished will be known only after a passage of years. With the thanks of the University

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—from the magazine AMERICA

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Enclosed is a newspaper clipping which shows the background we gave to the presentation of these books. I think this is a real contribution to citizenship in our student body and we appreciate very much the donor's generous gift.