

Handout C: Excerpts from the United States Constitution and the Bill of Rights

1. Answers may include: protect property rights and commerce by ensuring that Congress could lay and collect taxes; pay debts; make sure that duties, imposts, and excises would be uniform; borrow money; regulate commerce with foreign nations, among states, and with Indian tribes; make uniform laws for bankruptcies; coin money; provide for punishment of counterfeiting; securing right to authors' and inventors' writings and discoveries; define and punish piracies; ensure that no capitation or direct tax would be laid unless by proportion of the census; ensure that no preference in commerce or revenue would be given to any state over another; ensure that no money would be drawn from the treasury except when appropriates were made by law; protecting the rights of free speech, press, exercise of religion, assembly, and petition; protecting the right of the people to bear arms; protect the right of the people to be secure in their persons, houses, papers, and effects; ensure that people were protected against unreasonable searches and seizures; ensure that warrants were issued to conduct searches; ensure that no person would be deprived of life, liberty, or property without due process; ensure that private property would not be taken for public use without just compensation; ensure that there would not be excessive bail, fines, nor cruel or unusual punishments be inflicted.
2. The Framers believes that protecting property rights was one of the purposes of government and that property and civil rights are not mutually exclusive—you can't have one without the other.