

We the People

THE CITIZEN & THE CONSTITUTION



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Eastman Johnson (1824-1906) Private Collection

(study after “Washington Crossing the Delaware,”

by Emmanuel Leutze, the Metropolitan Museum, NY)

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Warren E. Burger

(1907–1995)

**Chief Justice of the
United States, 1969–1986**

**CHAIR, COMMISSION ON THE BICENTENNIAL
OF THE UNITED STATES CONSTITUTION**

The years 1987 to 1991 marked the 200th anniversary of the writing, ratification, and implementation of the basic documents of American democracy, the Constitution and the Bill of Rights. Our Constitution has stood the tests and stresses of time, wars, and change. Although it was not perfect, as Benjamin Franklin and many others recognized, it has lasted because it was carefully crafted by men who understood the importance of a system of government sufficiently strong to meet the challenges of the day, yet sufficiently flexible to accommodate and adapt to new political, economic, and social conditions.

Many Americans have but a slight understanding of the Constitution, the Bill of Rights, and the later amendments to which we pledge our allegiance. The lessons in this book are designed to give you, the next generation of American citizens, an understanding of the background, creation, and subsequent history of the unique system of government brought into being by our Constitution. At the same time, it will help you understand the principles and ideals that underlie and give meaning to the Constitution, a system of government by those governed.

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