POLI 330 – week 1 edapts

… The Role of Government and Comparative Analysis of Government

What is the primary role of government in society?

To rule a land and its people through formal political arrangements

The United States is often referred to as a democracy, but its official form of government is a republic. The foundation of the American Republic is rooted in key principles established during the drafting of the U.S. Constitution in 1787.

representative democracy, is designed to balance the need for citizen involvement with the practicalities of governing a large and diverse nation.

Types of Governments

Autocracies: a system where all power is concentrated in the hands of a single leader or ruler without checks and balances. A ruler's authority is often unchallenged, and they generally make decisions without consulting others.

Oligarchies: power is held by a small group of people, often from a particular class, wealth group, or institution. Society often reflects the ruling elite's interests instead of the general population. These elites control the government and make decisions for the rest of the population.

Constitutional Governments: are governed by a set of laws or a constitution that limits the power of government officials and ensures that individual rights are protected. This framework helps prevent the abuse of power.

Totalitarian States: beyond authoritarian control, seeking to dominate every aspect of public and private life, including citizens' thoughts, beliefs, and actions. The economy, educational system, and media are state-controlled. These governments often exercise absolute control over every aspect of society and use propaganda and extensive surveillance to maintain control.

Authoritarian Regimes: the government maintains strict control over political life, often with limited input or opposition from the general public. Individual freedoms such as freedom of speech and press are typically restricted.

Democracies: a system where power is vested in the people, either directly or through elected representatives. In democracies, citizens have the right to vote, participate in decision-making, and hold their leaders accountable. Democratic governments protect individual rights and freedoms and uphold the rule of law.

Constitutional governments are governed by a set of laws or a constitution that limits the power of government officials and ensures that individual rights are protected. This framework helps prevent the abuse of power.

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Which of the following statements accurately describes key principles of the U.S. Constitution?

The rule of law means that everyone, including government officials, is subject to the law.

Separation of powers divides government responsibilities among different branches to prevent any one branch from becoming too powerful.

Federalism is the distribution of power between the national and state governments.

Individual rights guarantee that citizens have certain freedoms and protections from government infringement.

Popular sovereignty ensures that the government derives its power from the consent of the governed.

Foundations of the American Political System: A Federal

The American political system is rooted in a blend of philosophical ideals, colonial experiences, practical challenges to governance, and debates over government's proper scope and nature. Four key documents, the Declaration of Independence, the Articles of Confederation, the U.S. Constitution, and the Federalist Papers

Seven U.S. Founders, as identified by historian Robert B. Morris, including George Washington, John Adams, Thomas Jefferson, Benjamin Franklin, John Jay, James Madison, and Alexander Hamilton.

The Declaration of Independence (1776), written primarily by Thomas Jefferson, reflects Enlightenment ideas and outlines the philosophical justification for the colonies' break from British rule.

Why were the Articles of Confederation considered inadequate?

They did not grant the national government the power to tax or regulate commerce.

***The Federalist Papers made the case for a stronger central government capable of addressing the issues that the Articles of Confederation could not, such as maintaining national defense,