

# CHAPTER SUMMARY

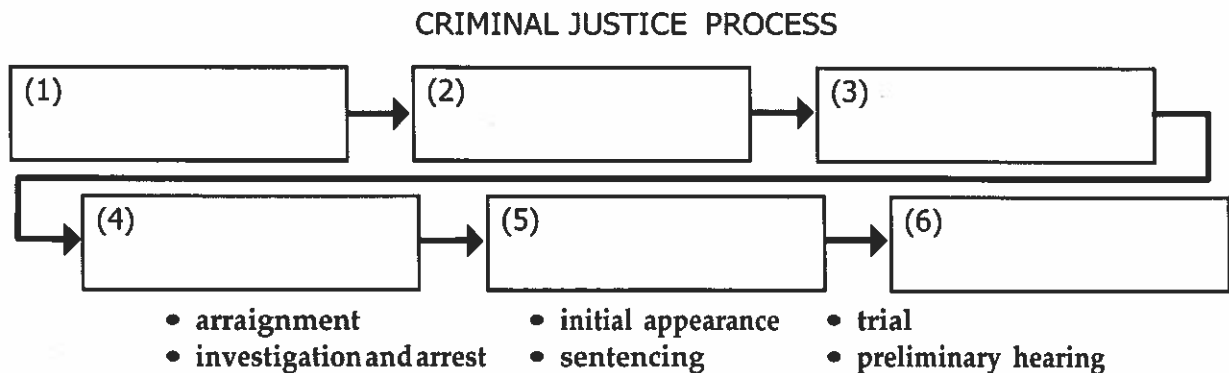
CHAPTER  
15

## Law in America

★ **DIRECTIONS** Match each term in Column A with the statement that best applies to it in Column B. Write the correct letters in the space provided.

Column A	Column B
_____ 1. statutory law _____ 2. administrative law _____ 3. plaintiff _____ 4. presumption of innocence _____ 5. contract _____ 6. tort _____ 7. injunction _____ 8. Miranda rule _____ 9. misdemeanors _____ 10. felonies	A. This principle requires a court to set a defendant free unless the prosecution proves its case. B. This type of court order forbids a defendant from taking or continuing an action. C. The rules and regulations that government agencies use to carry out statutory laws D. A rule that holds that suspects must be clearly informed of their rights before police question them. E. Laws that are written by legislatures F. This category includes the most serious kinds of crimes. G. A set of voluntary promises, enforceable by law and agreed to by parties H. This category includes crimes that are more serious than petty offenses but less serious than felonies. I. This party files the charges in a civil case. J. Any wrongful act, other than breach of contract, for which a party might sue

**Organizing Information** Examine the diagram and study the list below of steps taken in most felony cases. Write each step in the correct order on the flowchart.



**Critical Thinking** Answer the following question on a separate sheet of paper.

11. What do you think happens if the defendant in a civil suit does not respond to the charges?



## Chapter 16 Summarycontinued

### PARTY ORGANIZATION *(continued)*

- The party out of power criticizes government policy and offers its own solutions. Fear that the opposition may gain popular support makes the party in power more sensitive to the will of the people.
- Political parties encourage groups with competing interests to work together. Parties contribute to a stable political environment and the peaceful transfer of power. This peaceful transfer of power from one party to another, as opposed to revolution, is a hallmark of stable societies.

### ★ **NOMINATING CANDIDATES** \*\*\*\*\*

Historically parties have used three methods of choosing candidates: caucuses, nominating conventions, and primary elections.

Candidate Selection Method	Description
Caucus	A private meeting of party leaders. In the 1830s complaints that caucuses were undemocratic led to the adoption of nominating conventions.
Nominating Convention	An official public meeting of a party to choose candidates for office.
Direct Primary	An election in which voters select candidates to run in the general election.

Most states hold a closed primary, in which only registered members of a political party can vote for that party's candidates. Almost 20 hold open primaries, in which all voters may participate, but each voter can select names from only one party's list of candidates.

Most states hold direct primary elections for president. Through the primary elections, voters can express preferences before the nominating conventions take place. Critics contend that the primary system is flawed because:

- The primaries last too long and are too expensive.
- Media coverage emphasizes personalities at the expense of issues.
- Since primary victories have more influence on the race, more states have moved their primary date to earlier in the year.

After the primaries comes the national convention. Four committees lay the groundwork for the convention.

- The rules committee proposes convention procedures and sets the order of business.
- The credentials committee officially approves the membership of each state delegation.
- The committee on permanent organization selects the officials who will oversee the convention.
- The platform committee writes the party's platform—a statement of its principles, its positions on vital issues, and its approach to those issues. When disputes arise over planks, or individual parts of the platform, party leaders must work out a compromise or risk entering the election with a divided party.

The highlight of the convention comes when supporters of each candidate make nominating speeches and the delegates vote. On the final day, the nominees deliver their acceptance speeches. The convention then adjourns for another four years.

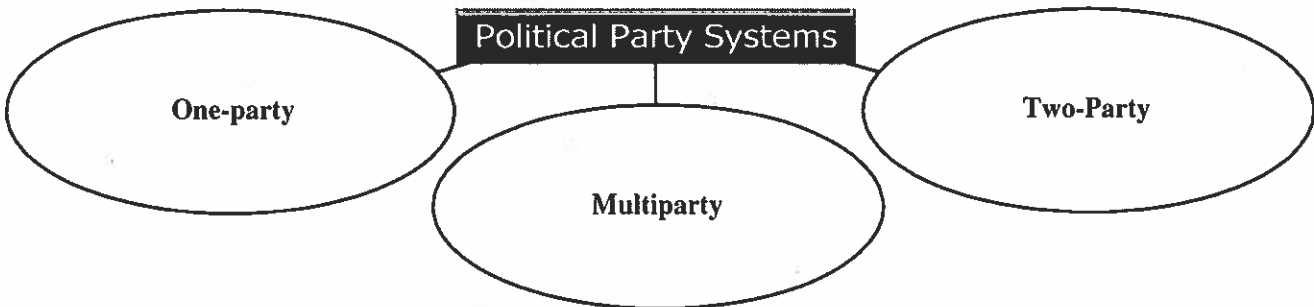
**CHAPTER SUMMARY** \* \* \* \* \* **CHAPTER 16** \* \* \*

**Political Parties**

★ **DIRECTIONS** In the space provided, write the word or phrase that best completes each sentence.

1. A political party is a group of people with broad common interests who organize to win \_\_\_\_\_, control \_\_\_\_\_, and influence public policy.
2. In a multiparty system, several parties often combine to form a \_\_\_\_\_ government.
3. A \_\_\_\_\_ party forms when a group splits off from a major party to support an alternative candidate for president.
4. The basic local unit of a party is the \_\_\_\_\_, a district ranging in size from a few to more than 1,000 voters; several adjoining precincts make up a \_\_\_\_\_.
5. The national party organization has two components: the national \_\_\_\_\_ and the national \_\_\_\_\_.
6. A direct \_\_\_\_\_ is an election in which voters select candidates to run in the general election.
7. In a \_\_\_\_\_, only registered members of a political party can vote for that party's candidates.
8. A \_\_\_\_\_ is a written statement of the party's principles, its position on vital issues, and its approach to those issues.
9. When disputes arise over \_\_\_\_\_, individual parts of the party's written statement, party leaders must work out a compromise position for the party to adopt.

**Organizing Information** Examine the following diagram and study the list of characteristics associated with different political party systems. Write each item under the appropriate heading.



- coalition governments
- authoritarian governments
- politically unstable
- theocracy
- many differing ideologies
- splinter party

**Critical Thinking** Answer the following question on a separate sheet of paper.

10. When disputes arise over parts of the party platform, why must party leaders work out a compromise before the convention ends?

# CHAPTER SUMMARY

CHAPTER  
17

## Elections and Voting

### ★ ELECTION CAMPAIGNS \*\*\*\*\*

To be elected president, a candidate must win at least 270 of the 538 electoral votes. Because the number of electoral votes varies from state to state, a candidate who wins in the 11 most populous states would win the election. Because a candidate needs to win as many states as possible, he or she must appeal to a broad range of voters across the nation.

Presidential candidates need an effective strategy and an efficient campaign organization. The campaign organization carefully structures the candidate's appearances to project a positive, presidential image. It also coordinates state and local efforts on the candidate's behalf. A campaign manager, who is responsible for overall strategy and planning, oversees the organization.

Until the 1970s, presidential candidates relied on contributions from the wealthy and powerful. A series of Federal Election Campaign Acts attempted to make the process more democratic. These laws were based on three principles:

- **Public Funding** Major party candidates can receive millions of dollars in federal money. Third-party candidates can qualify if they received at least five percent of the popular vote in the most recent election.
- **Limits on Spending** Business and labor cannot make direct contributions, and contributions from individuals are limited to \$2,300.
- **Public Disclosure** Candidates, parties, and political action committees must keep records and report all contributions over \$100 to the Federal Elections Commission.

Two loopholes exist in FECA regulations: soft money, or general purpose funds not designated to a particular candidate; and issue-advocacy advertisements, which support an issue rather than a particular candidate. In 2002 the Bipartisan Campaign Reform Act tried to control campaign spending by banning soft-money donations and putting limits on issue-advocacy advertisements.

### ★ EXPANDING VOTING RIGHTS \*\*\*\*\*

The right to vote, or suffrage, is the foundation of democracy in the U.S. In the 1700s only white males who owned property had the right to vote. In the 1800s state legislatures abolished the property requirements.

The Fifteenth Amendment, ratified in 1870, prohibited states from depriving any citizen of the right to vote on the basis of race or color. Southern states responded by setting up other obstacles to African American voters. Some imposed a poll tax—money that a citizen had to pay before voting. Others required voters to pass a literacy test. The grandfather clause exempted citizens whose grandfathers had voted before 1867 from these requirements. African Americans could not qualify because they did not have voting rights before 1867.

In the twentieth century, the federal government began taking action against these unfair restrictions.

In 1915 the Supreme Court declared the grandfather clause unconstitutional. The Twenty-fourth Amendment, ratified in 1964, outlawed poll taxes in national elections. In 1966 the Supreme Court banned their use in state elections. The Voting Rights Act of 1965 outlawed literacy tests.

The Voting Rights Act of 1965 and later voting rights laws empowered the federal government to register voters in any district where less than 50 percent of African American adults were on the voting lists. These laws allowed the federal government to intervene in places where local officials appeared to be discriminating. The voting rights laws also provided for poll watchers to insure that votes were properly counted. As a result of these efforts, the percentage of African Americans registered to vote increased from 29 percent in the 1960s to more than 60 percent today.

*(continued)*

## Chapter 17 Summarycontinued

### EXPANDING VOTING RIGHTS *(continued)*

The struggle for woman suffrage began in the 1830s, but by 1914 only eleven states had granted women the right to vote. Full woman suffrage was not achieved until 1920 with the ratification of the

Nineteenth Amendment. The Twenty-sixth Amendment, ratified in 1971, lowered the voting age from 21 to 18.

### ★ INFLUENCES ON VOTERS \*\*\*\*\*


FIVE MAJOR FACTORS INFLUENCE VOTERS' DECISIONS	
Personal Background	This factor includes upbringing, family, age, occupation, and income level. Education, religion, and racial or ethnic heritage are other background factors that might influence a voter's decision. Many voters, however, are cross-pressured, which means that elements in their backgrounds might have conflicting influences on their final decisions.
Loyalty to a Political Party	Voters with the strongest allegiance to a party often vote a straight-party ticket—they select only candidates from that party. Weak party voters are more likely to switch their votes to the rival party from time to time. The number of independent voters, those who belong to no party, has increased in recent years.
Campaign Issues	Television and higher levels of education help modern voters to be more informed. Issues with the greatest influence include Social Security, health care, taxes, education, affirmative action, abortion, gun rights, and the environment.
The Voter's Image of Candidate	The way voters perceive the issues is just as important as the issues themselves. The image of the candidates in the voters' minds is closely related to public perception of the issues. Most voters want a president who appears to be trustworthy and strong.
Propaganda	Propaganda is information that is used to influence opinion. Propaganda is not necessarily untrue, but it is used to support a predetermined objective. The use of patriotic symbols and celebrity endorsements to sway voter opinions are examples of political propaganda.

People who vote regularly tend to have positive attitudes toward citizenship and government. The more educated people are, the more likely they are to vote. Middle-aged citizens have the highest voter turnout rates. Voter regularity also increases with income level.

Many U.S. citizens do not exercise the right to vote. The percentage of voters has declined since 1960.

Every state but one requires voters to register—officially record their names with local election boards before an election. Voter registration helps prevent election fraud. Once registered, a person remains eligible to vote unless he or she dies, moves, or fails to vote for a certain number of years. Some political experts have recommended a national registration system under which voters would not have to register again when they move.

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**CHAPTER SUMMARY** \* \* \* \* \* 

## Elections and Voting

★ **DIRECTIONS** In the space provided, write the word or phrase that best completes each sentence.

1. \_\_\_\_\_ committees are organizations designed to support political candidates with campaign contributions.
2. The term \_\_\_\_\_ money refers to general purpose funds not designated to a particular candidate.
3. To thwart the Fifteenth Amendment, many Southern states set up poll \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ tests.
4. African Americans could not qualify for the \_\_\_\_\_ clause, an exemption to state voting requirements, because they did not have voting rights before 1867.
5. The \_\_\_\_\_ Act of 1965 allowed the federal government to register voters in districts where local officials appeared to be discriminating.
6. Full \_\_\_\_\_ suffrage was achieved in 1920 with the ratification of the Nineteenth Amendment.
7. In 1971 the Twenty-sixth Amendment lowered the voting age from \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_.
8. \_\_\_\_\_ voters are those who are not registered members of any political party.
9. The use of patriotic symbols and celebrity endorsements are examples of \_\_\_\_\_.
10. Every state but one requires voters to \_\_\_\_\_, officially record their names with local election boards before an election.

**Organizing Information** Write each of the factors that might influence voters' decisions under the appropriate heading in the table.

FACTORS INFLUENCING VOTER DECISIONS				
Personal Background	Party Loyalty	Campaign Issues	Candidate's Image	Propaganda

- |  |  |  |
|--|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• health care</li> <li>• effective speaking style</li> <li>• movie star endorsements</li> <li>• college degree</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• lifelong Democrat</li> <li>• taxes</li> <li>• electrician</li> <li>• pleasing appearance</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• United States flag</li> <li>• independent voter</li> <li>• 25 years old</li> <li>• the environment</li> </ul> |
|--|--|--|

**Critical Thinking** Answer the following question on a separate sheet of paper.

11. In what ways might voter registration prevent election fraud?



**CHAPTER SUMMARY** \* \* \* \* \* **CHAPTER 18** \* \* \*

## Interest Groups and Public Opinion

### ★ INTEREST GROUP ORGANIZATION

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Thousands of interest groups try to influence government actions. These groups provide campaign funds to candidates. They also work to pass laws that benefit their members. Many people believe that interest groups help citizens communicate their goals and concerns to the government. Others contend that they exert undue influence.

Interest group leaders plan strategy, raise funds, and act as spokespersons for the group. They keep members of the group informed of their activities through mailings and telephone calls. Some people join interest groups to promote individual economic interests. Others join because the group supports their views on some aspect of public policy.

TYPICAL INTEREST GROUPS	
National Association of Manufacturers and the Chamber of Commerce	represent business groups
Committee on Political Education	represents the interests of union workers who belong to the AFL-CIO
American Farm Bureau Federation and the National Farmers' Union	organizations for large and small farmers respectively
American Bar Association and the American Medical Association	represent lawyers and doctors respectively
Sierra Club and the National Wildlife Federation	environmentalist organizations

Public interest groups seek policy goals that benefit the general public. Public Citizen, Inc., for example, focuses on consumer safety issues, while Common Cause tries to reform the political system.

Foreign governments and companies also have interest groups that seek military aid, economic aid, or favorable trade agreements.

### ★ AFFECTING PUBLIC POLICY

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Interest groups try to influence policy through direct contact with government officials. This activity is called lobbying because the contact traditionally occurred in lobbies of capitols. Interest groups hire people called lobbyists to make this contact. Most lobbyists are former government officials, lawyers, or public relations experts. Former lawmakers cannot become lobbyists within one year of leaving Congress.

A 1946 law required lobbyists to register and file semiannual reports with Congress. The law, unfortunately, contained loopholes that Congress tried

to close by passing the Lobbying Disclosure Act of 1995. In addition the Senate now forbids members to accept any gift worth more than \$50 from a lobbyist.

Lobbyists provide policy makers with information supporting their group's position. They testify before congressional committees and try to influence voting when a bill reaches the floor. Lobbyists also help draft almost 50 percent of all legislation.

Interest groups also encourage their members to write letters urging government officials to support or oppose specific policies. Some create media

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## Chapter 18 Summarycontinued

### AFFECTING PUBLIC POLICY *(continued)*

advertisements to gain public support. Two factors limit the effectiveness of interest groups:

- Competition among groups with conflicting interests keeps any single group from dominating the lobbying process.
- Generally the larger the group, the more diverse its members' views are. This diversity prevents interest groups from adopting broad policy objectives.

In the 1970s Congress prohibited corporations and labor unions from making direct contributions to political campaigns. The government also set limits for political action committees (PACs)—organizations that raise money and provide support for a political candidate. Court rulings, however, limited government regulation of PACs. Affiliated PACs have ties to corporations, unions, or trade groups. Independent PACs are interested in a particular cause, such as the environment.

The 527 organizations, named from the tax code exemption it receives, urge voters to support a certain issue (and thus indirectly a certain candidate).

### ★ SHAPING PUBLIC OPINION \*\*\*\*\*

The term *public opinion* refers to the ideas and attitudes a significant number of Americans hold on political issues. Three factors characterize American public opinion: (1) The diversity of the population contributes to a range of opinions on many issues. (2) Citizens communicate with government through interest groups, letters, and opinion polls. (3) "A significant number of U.S. citizens" in the context of public opinion means enough people to make government officials listen.

Several forces contribute to political socialization, the process by which individuals acquire their political beliefs:

- **Family** More than two-thirds of adults in the U.S. favor the political party their parents supported.

- **Schools** Education instills knowledge and democratic values.
- **Peer Groups** Friends and associates influence an individual's opinions.
- **Economic and Social Status** Income, age, geographic region, race, and gender help shape political beliefs.
- **The Media** How the media depict groups can help discredit or reinforce stereotypes.

An ideology is a set of beliefs about government and society. Liberals believe the national government should be active in helping individuals and communities. Conservatives believe the government's role should be limited. Most voters identify themselves as moderates, that is somewhere between liberal and conservative on most issues.

### ★ MEASURING PUBLIC OPINION \*\*\*\*\*

Opinion polls measure public attitudes. Straw polls are unscientific because they do not ensure that the sample, or group responding, accurately reflects the views of the public. Scientific polling involves three basic steps: (1) selecting a sample that is representative of a larger group; (2) wording the questions carefully; and (3) interpreting the results.

The larger group whose opinion is to be measured is called the "universe." Pollsters question a representative sample, or a small group typical of the universe. To select the small group, they use random sampling, a technique in which every person in the poll's universe has an equal chance of being selected.

A sampling error is a measurement of possible inaccuracy in the poll's results. A sampling error of 3 percent means that the opinion of the universe could be 3 percent higher or 3 percent lower than the sample. In a close election, sampling error can be a very significant factor.

Since the wording can greatly influence people's responses to questions, scientific pollsters phrase their questions very carefully. Even scientific polls can be misleading. Individuals sometimes give what they think is the socially acceptable answer. Some respondents may pretend to have an informed opinion. At best polls provide only a snapshot of public opinion at the time.

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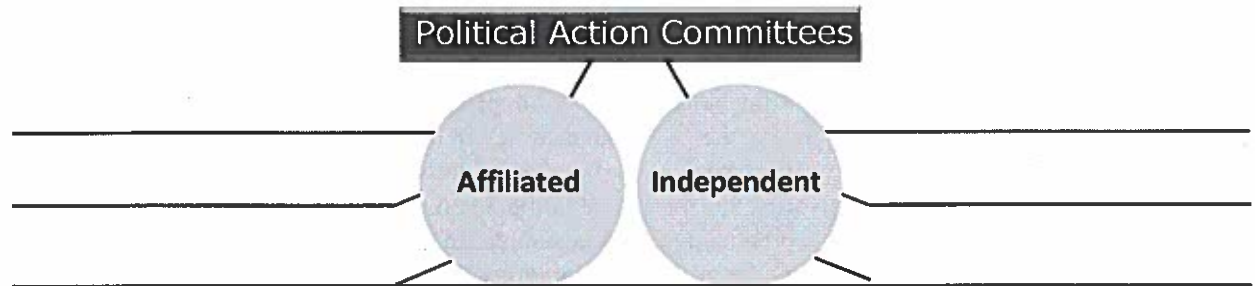
CHAPTER  
18

## Interest Groups and Public Opinion

★ **DIRECTIONS** Match each term in Column A with the statement that best applies to it in Column B. Write the correct letters in the space provided.

Column A	Column B
___ 1. public interest group	A. Ideas and attitudes about government and political issues
___ 2. lobbyists	B. Insures that every person in the poll's universe has an equal chance of being selected
___ 3. affiliated PAC	C. A belief that the national government should actively help individuals and communities
___ 4. independent PAC	D. Individuals who try to influence public policy through direct contact with government officials
___ 5. public opinion	E. A set of basic beliefs about government and society
___ 6. ideology	F. PACs with ties to corporations, unions, or trade groups
___ 7. liberal	G. The larger group whose opinion is being measured in a poll
___ 8. representative sample	H. Organization which seeks policy goals that will benefit the general public
___ 9. random sampling	I. A small group typical of the larger group whose opinion is being measured
___ 10. universe	J. A PAC interested in a particular cause

**Organizing Information** Write the name of each interest group near the type of political action committee which it best represents.



- |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Committee on Political Information</li> <li>• National Association of Manufacturers</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Chamber of Commerce</li> <li>• National Wildlife Federation</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sierra Club</li> <li>• Common Cause</li> </ul> |
|---|---|---|

**Critical Thinking** Answer the following question on a separate sheet of paper.

11. What kinds of information do you think lobbyists might be required to include in the reports they file with Congress?

**CHAPTER SUMMARY** \* \* \* \* \* **CHAPTER 19** \* \* \*

## The Media and Politics

**★ HOW MEDIA IMPACT GOVERNMENT** \* \* \* \* \*

The president and the mass media have a mutually beneficial relationship. The president receives far more news coverage than all other government officials combined. The media, in turn, allow presidents to communicate directly with the public.

Congress and the federal courts receive far less media attention than does the president. Their

slow, complicated activities are not dramatic enough for television. Confirmation hearings, oversight activities, or the personal lives of lawmakers may become the focus of media attention if there are allegations of scandal.

- Candidates for major office must be telegenic—project a pleasing image on camera.
- Political unknowns who skillfully use television can quickly become serious candidates.
- Television allows celebrities, whom voters instantly recognize, to run for office without working their way up through a party’s organization.
- The media stress “horse-race coverage” of presidential primaries. They focus on “winners” and “losers” rather than on issues. Front-runners, or early winners, can attract financial support for their campaigns. Early “losers” may be forced to drop out.
- Candidates spend huge sums on spot advertising—brief, televised commercials that present positive images of the candidate or negative images of the opposition.
- Television has also made candidates more dependent on financial contributors to help fund their campaigns.
- The issues emphasized by the media play a large role in defining the public agenda—societal problems that both citizens and government agree need attention.

**★ REGULATING PRINT AND BROADCAST MEDIA** \* \* \* \* \*

The Federal Communications Commission, or FCC, regulates interstate and international communications by radio, television, telephone, telegraph, cable and satellite. It also grants licenses to radio and television stations. The FCC cannot censor broadcasts. It can, however, make rules in the public interest. Stations that violate these rules can be fined or have their licenses revoked.

The extent of FCC content regulation varies in response to changing technology, court rulings, and changes in the political climate. For example, the controversial fairness doctrine, which

required broadcasters to guarantee equal airtime to both sides of a controversial issue, was abandoned in 1987.

The federal government set rules for media ownership to prevent monopolies in large cities, but in 1996, the Telecommunications Act relaxed many of these FCC controls. This law aimed to increase competition; it also included limits on violent and obscene content. The George W. Bush administration strengthened laws against obscene content, but to date there is no evidence that these laws have been actively implemented.

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## Chapter 19 Summarycontinued

### ★ THE INTERNET AND DEMOCRACY

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The Internet is rapidly becoming a new type of global mass medium with a major impact on American government and politics. The Internet has the power to reach a widespread and diverse global audience while supporting interactive communications among many people at once. This makes it possible to quickly mobilize large numbers of people in support of a political candidate or issue.

Citizens can use the Internet to access government services and information through political web sites, electronic mailing lists, e-government, and legislative databases. Furthermore, the Internet increases citizen participation by allowing for increased interaction with government officials, the rapid spread of current political information through action alerts and

petitions, the development of grassroots web sites, and increased volunteer opportunities. Many states are even researching and developing electronic voting programs that will allow citizens to vote online in primary and general elections.

The rise of the Internet has also presented several challenges for public policy. While freedom of expression on the Internet is guaranteed by the First Amendment, government must find ways to protect children from offensive material online. Controversy also exists between state and local governments and some companies about whether to tax E-commerce, or the sale of goods and services online.

**CHAPTER SUMMARY** \* \* \* \* \*



## The Media and Politics

★ **DIRECTIONS** In the space provided, write the word or phrase that best completes each sentence.

1. The \_\_\_\_\_ include all the means for communicating information to the general public.
2. The \_\_\_\_\_ is a major source of information for individuals with computers.
3. A \_\_\_\_\_ is a meeting at which journalists come prepared to ask questions.
4. Media \_\_\_\_\_ are visually interesting appearances designed to reinforce the president's position on an issue.
5. Political \_\_\_\_\_ who make skillful use of television can quickly become serious candidates for high office.
6. The media stress \_\_\_\_\_ coverage of presidential primaries, focusing on "winners" and "losers," rather than on issues.
7. The media play a large role in defining the public \_\_\_\_\_—societal problems that both citizens and government agree need attention.
8. The Federal \_\_\_\_\_ Commission (FCC) licenses radio and television stations and regulates them in the public interest.
9. The \_\_\_\_\_ doctrine required television and radio stations to provide reasonable opportunities for expressing opposing points of view.
10. The \_\_\_\_\_ Act of 1996 relaxed limits on media ownership while trying to combat violent or obscene content in the media.

**Organizing Information** Imagine you are a television reporter attending a presidential press conference. In the space provided below, list at least three policy areas and formulate questions to ask the president about those areas.

POLICY AREAS	QUESTIONS

**Critical Thinking** Answer the following question on a separate sheet of paper.

11. Do you think the Internet has had a positive or negative impact on politics and government? Why?

**CHAPTER SUMMARY** \* \* \* \* \* **CHAPTER 20** \* \* \* \* \*

**Taxing and Spending**

**★ RAISING MONEY** \* \* \* \* \*

Approximately ninety cents of every dollar in government revenue comes from taxes—payments by individuals and businesses to support government activities.

- Individual income tax provides about 45 cents out of every dollar raised. This income tax is a progressive tax—people with higher incomes pay a higher percentage in taxes. The income tax is levied on a person’s taxable income, which is the total income after certain deductions and personal exemptions have been subtracted.
- Corporate income taxes account for about 14 percent of government revenues. Nonprofit organizations, such as churches and colleges, are exempt from these taxes.
- Social insurance taxes pay for programs such as Social Security and Medicare. These taxes contribute about 33 cents of every tax dollar collected.
- Excise taxes are taxes on the manufacture,

transportation, sale, or consumption of goods and services. The government imposes excise taxes on many items such as cigarettes and liquor.

- Customs duties, also known as tariffs, are levied on many goods imported into the United States. Customs duties provide about two cents of every tax dollar.
- The federal government also taxes estates—the assets (property and money) of a person who dies—and gifts of money from a living person if the estate or gift is more than a specified limit.

Groups sometimes persuade Congress to write special exemptions into the tax laws. Critics call these provisions tax loopholes. The Tax Reform Act of 1986 attempted to reduce loopholes by simplifying tax laws.

In addition to collecting taxes, the federal government raises money by borrowing. In 1996 borrowing accounted for about 10 cents of every dollar raised by the government.

**★ PREPARING THE FEDERAL BUDGET** \* \* \* \* \*

The Budget and Accounting Act of 1921 gave the president responsibility for overseeing the preparation of the budget. The federal government operates on a fiscal year—a 12-month period that begins on

October 1 of one year and ends on September 30 of the following year. Preparation of the budget for any given fiscal year begins 19 months in advance and follows these steps:

- Each federal agency draws up its spending plans and sends these requests to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB).
- The president reviews these plans and returns them with guidelines for preparing final budgets.
- The agencies modify their original requests to fit the president’s guidelines. The OMB officials and agency heads negotiate funding reductions or increases.
- The OMB submits a complete budget document to the president for final review. The president may make some changes before sending it to Congress.
- The House and Senate Budget Committees review the president’s proposals and prepare a concurrent resolution that sets forth the federal spending and tax plan for the coming fiscal year.
- Various congressional committees reconcile, or fit, the plans in the concurrent resolution to existing programs. Then they draft a reconciliation bill that the House and Senate must approve.
- The House passes an appropriations bill which sets aside money for the expenditures approved.

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