

Section

2

The Consultation

Main Ideas

1. The Consultation met to debate the future of Texas and to form a provisional government.
2. Conflicts soon arose within the new government.

Why It Matters Today

Texans held the Consultation to discuss the formation of a government. Use current events sources to learn about new governments being formed in countries around the world today.

Key Terms and People

- Consultation
- Declaration of November 7, 1835
- provisional
- Henry Smith
- Sam Houston

The Story Continues

Several Texas settlers had braved long distances and hard travel to reach San Felipe de Austin. Some had been delayed by the fighting in Gonzales, Goliad, and San Antonio. Others were delayed by the confusion that surrounded events. Still, they had an important mission. As delegates to the Consultation, they would debate the future of Texas.



TEKS: 3B, 3C, 17A, 17C, 21A, 21B, 21E, 22D

myNotebook

Use the annotation tools in your eBook to take notes on the decisions made and actions taken by the Consultation.

★ Debating Independence

While Austin and Burleson were besieging San Antonio, another group of Texans was taking part in a convention that would have equally great consequences. Known as the **Consultation**, its purpose was to discuss Texans' plans for dealing with Mexico. Scheduled to begin in mid-October, the opening was delayed by the outbreak of battles in Texas.

Finally, on November 4, 1835, the Consultation began. No delegates from the fighting areas were present. Immediately disagreements arose. Pro-war delegates argued that Texas should declare independence from Mexico. The pro-peace group wanted to remain loyal to Mexico. Many Tejanos were torn, worried about their future in an independent Texas.

Three days after meeting, the Consultation issued the **Declaration of November 7, 1835**. In this document, they justified the fighting that had already taken place against Mexico. The Texans were not rebelling, they argued, but only fighting to defend their rights under the Constitution of 1824. As long as Mexico denied these rights, they continued, the Texan were justified in creating their own government.



HISTORIC DOCUMENT

Declaration of the People of Texas

The Consultation adopted the following statement on November 7, 1835.

“Whereas, General Antonio Lopez de Santa Anna and other Military Chieftains have, by force of arms, overthrown the Federal Institutions of Mexico, and dissolved the Social Compact which existed between Texas and the other Members of the Mexican Confederacy—Now, the good People of Texas, availing themselves of their natural rights, SOLEMNLY DECLARE

1st. That they have taken up arms in defense of their rights and Liberties, which were

threatened by the encroachments [advances beyond proper limits] of military despots, and in defense of the Republican Principles of the Federal Constitution of Mexico of 1824. . . .

These Declarations we solemnly avow to the world, and call GOD to witness their truth and sincerity. . . .

[P. B. Dexter], Secretary B. T. Archer, President”

Analyzing Primary Sources

1. **Finding the Main Idea** Why was the declaration issued?
2. **Drawing Inferences and Conclusions** According to the declaration, why did Texans take up arms?

The Consultation then created a **provisional**, or temporary, government. It elected **Henry Smith** governor and James Robinson lieutenant governor. Governor Smith was a member of the pro-war group and had been active in Texas politics since 1827. To help run the government, the Consultation created the General Council. In addition, the delegates chose three commissioners to travel to the United States: Stephen F. Austin, William H. Wharton, and Branch T. Archer. Their goals were to recruit volunteers for the army and to raise money.

The delegates next turned to military matters. They established a professional army, modeled after the U.S. Army, with **Sam Houston** as its commander-in-chief. Houston was an experienced soldier and politician. He had served in the U.S. Congress and as governor of Tennessee. But as commander of the Texas army, Houston faced several problems. At that time, Texas forces were entirely made up of volunteers, not professional soldiers. As volunteers, they did not answer to Houston. And because the Consultation did not give him money, Houston could not pay professional soldiers. He was a commander with no army.

In addition to an army, the General Council authorized the creation of a navy. It was to protect the Texas coast and guard ships traveling from New Orleans and other eastern ports. The four-ship navy allowed supplies to reach Texas forces. It also kept Mexico from resupplying Santa Anna’s army by sea. For example, in March 1836, the Mexican schooner *Pelicano* was seized with 300 barrels of gunpowder on board. The council also licensed private vessels to attack enemy ships on behalf of the government.

Reading Check Finding the Main Idea What were the major outcomes of the Consultation?



VIDEO
The Fathers
of Texas

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★ The Provisional Government

It was not long before conflict broke out among members of the provisional government. One such conflict dealt with military strategy. Some Texans in favor of independence wanted to attack Matamoros, a city across the Rio Grande. They hoped that doing so would stir federalists in other parts of northern Mexico to join the protest against Santa Anna's government. Francis Johnson and James Grant organized an army of volunteer troops for this campaign. Neither Sam Houston nor Governor Smith supported the plan. They did not think that Texas had enough resources—either money or people—to support so risky a plan. The General Council sided with Johnson and Grant. After a great deal of debate and arguments over strategy, they left for Matamoros, hoping to gather additional volunteers along the way.

Meanwhile, Houston and William Goyens of Nacogdoches went to East Texas to negotiate a peace treaty with the Cherokees. The two were well suited for the task. Houston had lived with the Cherokees in Tennessee and Oklahoma as a young man. Goyens had served as a diplomat to the Cherokees of East Texas for many years. Because of their efforts, the Cherokees agreed not to side with Mexico in the revolution.

Other efforts of the provisional government were less successful. Texas did not have clear goals or good leadership, and several conflicts emerged between members of the General Council. Disagreements also arose between Smith, who wanted immediate independence for Texas, and the council members of the pro-peace group. Despite protests from Smith, in December 1835 the General Council scheduled a new convention for March 1, 1836, to solve the government's problems.

Reading Check Drawing Inferences and Conclusions What caused the problems faced by the provisional government?



Sam Houston had lived with the Cherokees for several years. For the rest of his life, he often wore Cherokee-style clothing.



Section 2 Review



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ONLINE QUIZ

1. Define and explain:

- provisional

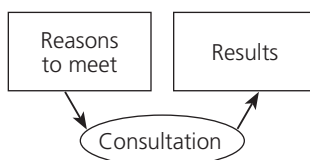
2. Identify and explain

the significance of each of the following in Texas history:

- Consultation
- Declaration of November 7, 1835
- Henry Smith
- Sam Houston

3. Identifying Cause and Effect

Copy the graphic organizer below. Use it to show why the Consultation met and what it hoped to accomplish.



4. Finding the Main Idea

- What type of government did the delegates establish?
- How did the structure of the provisional government create problems?

5. Writing and Critical Thinking

myWriteSmart

Supporting a Point of View Imagine that you are a delegate. Write a letter supporting either the pro-war group's drive for independence or the peace group's position to stay part of Mexico.

Consider the following:

- arguments of the pro-war group
- arguments of the peace group