

THE CONSTITUTION OF THE KINGDOM OF NORWAY

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The Constitution of the Kingdom of Norway by Knute Nelson

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KNUTE NELSON

**THE CONSTITUTION
OF THE KINGDOM
OF NORWAY**

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CONSTITUTION
OF THE 71822
KINGDOM OF NORWAY. *Constitution*

Given by the Constituent Assembly at Eidsvold on
May 17th, 1814, and now, on the occasion of the
union between the Realms of Norway and
Sweden decreed by the Storting in
extra Session at Christiania,
revised and affirmed on
November 4th, 1814.
—With Amend-
ments.

TRANSLATED FROM THE NORWEGIAN
BY
U. S. SENATOR KNUTE NELSON

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The Constitution

—of—

The Kingdom of Norway.

Given by the Constituent Assembly at Eidsvold on May 17th, 1814, and now, on the occasion of the union between the Realms of Norway and Sweden decreed by the Storthing in extra Session at Christiania, revised and affirmed on November 4th, 1814.—With Amendments.

A.—Religion and Form of Government.

ARTICLE 1.—Norway is a free, independent, indivisible, and inalienable Kingdom, united with Sweden under one king. Its form of government shall be a limited and hereditary Monarchy.

ARTICLE 2.—The Evangelical Lutheran Religion shall remain the official religion of the State. Inhabitants who profess the same shall be required to educate their children therein. Jesuits and Monastic orders shall have no place in the country.

B.—The Executive Power, the King and the Royal Family.

ARTICLE 3.—The executive power shall be vested in the King.

ARTICLE 4.—The King shall at all times profess, maintain and defend the Evangelical Lutheran Religion.

ARTICLE 5.—The person of the King shall be sacred; he shall not be censured, nor impeached. His council shall alone bear the responsibility.

ARTICLE 6.—The order of succession shall be lineal and agnatic, as defined in the ordinance of succession, of September 26th, 1810, adopted by the Parliament of Sweden and accepted by the King, a translation of which is attached to this Constitution. A posthumous child shall be in line of succession and shall take his place therein as soon as he is born. When a Prince in line of succession to the United Crowns of Norway and Sweden shall be born, his name and time of birth shall be made known to the Storting at its next session and shall be entered in its journal.

ARTICLE 7.—If there is no Prince, entitled to the succession, living, the King may nominate his own successor to the Storting of Norway and the Parliament of Sweden, simultaneously; as soon as the King has made the nomination, the representatives of both nations shall select from their own midst, a committee, with power to choose in case the nominee of the King is not confirmed by a majority of the representatives of each nation, voting separately. The number of the members of this committee, which must be equal from both Kingdoms, and the order to be pursued in making a choice, shall be determined by a law proposed by the King, at the time of making the nomination, to the next Storting and Swedish Parliament. One member shall withdraw by lot from the assembled committee.

ARTICLE 8.—The age of majority of the King shall be fixed by a law to be enacted pursuant to an agreement between the Storthing of Norway and the Parliament of Sweden, or, in case they can not agree, by a committee selected by the representatives of both Kingdoms, under the forms prescribed in Article 7. The King shall publicly declare himself of age as soon as he has attained his majority.

ARTICLE 9.—As soon as the King is of age, and as such assumes the government, he shall take before the Storthing the following oath: "I promise and swear that I will govern the Kingdom of Norway in conformity with its constitution and laws, so help me God and his holy writ." If the Storthing is not then in session, the oath in writing shall be filed with the council of State, and shall be solemnly reiterated by the King before the next Storthing, either verbally, or in writing, by some one designated by the King therefor.

ARTICLE 10.—When the King is of age he shall be crowned and anointed in the Cathedral at Trondhjem, at such time and with such ceremonies as he himself may designate.

ARTICLE 11.—The King shall reside in Norway a part of each year, if important obstacles do not hinder.

ARTICLE 12.—The King shall appoint a State Council of Norwegian citizens, who shall not be less than thirty years of age. This council shall consist of two secretaries of state and not less than seven other members. The King shall apportion the public business among the members of the State Council in such manner as to him may seem best. The King, or in his absense the Secretary of State, together with the members of the State Council, may, on extraordinary occasions, summon, in addition to the regular members, other Norwegian citizens, not members of the Storthing, to take seat in the council. Father and son, or two brothers, cannot have seat in the council at the same time.

ARTICLE 13.—The King shall intrust, during his absence, the administration of the internal affairs of the Kingdom to such an extent as he may, himself, provide, to one of the Secretaries of State, and not less than five of the other members of the State Council. This body shall carry on the government in the name and on behalf of the King. They shall sacredly conform to the provisions of this constitution, and the different regulations in harmony therewith, embraced in the instructions of the King. They shall transmit to the King a respectful report concerning the matters thus disposed of by them. Official business shall be disposed of by vote, and in case the vote shall be equally divided, the Secretary of State, or in his absence, the first member of the State Council, shall have two votes.

ARTICLE 14.—(Repealed)

ARTICLE 15.—One of the Secretaries of State, together with two members of the State Council, who must be changed yearly, shall always remain with the King during his residence in Sweden. And they shall be under the same obligations and the same constitutional responsibilities as the members of the Council (named in Article 13) governing in Norway, and only in their presence shall Norwegian affairs be disposed of by the King. All applications from Norwegian citizens to the King shall first be presented to the Norwegian government, and supplied with its opinion before disposed of. Unless important obstacles intervene, no Norwegian affairs shall, as a rule, be disposed of by the King without first securing the opinion of the government in Norway. The Secretary of State shall bring the public business on for consideration, and shall be responsible for the dispatch of the same conformable to resolutions adopted.

ARTICLE 16.—The King shall establish regulations for all church and religious services of a public nature, and for all meetings and gatherings concerning religious affairs,

and he shall take care that the public instructors of religion adhere to the prescribed standards.

ARTICLE 17.—The King may issue and rescind ordinances relating to commerce, customs, industrial pursuits, and police regulation, but the same shall not conflict with the Constitution, or the laws of the Storthing, enacted pursuant to the provisions of Arts. 77, 78 and 79, herein contained. These ordinances shall remain in force, provisionally, until the next Storthing.

ARTICLE 18.—The King, as a rule, shall cause the taxes and imposts, levied by the Storthing, to be collected. The Norwegian national Treasury shall remain in Norway, and its income shall be devoted to the needs of Norway, exclusively.

ARTICLE 19.—The King shall take care that the property and regalia of the State be used and managed in the manner prescribed by the Storthing, and for the greatest good of the public.

ARTICLE 20.—The King is empowered, sitting in Council, to pardon criminals, after conviction; but it shall be optional with the criminal to accept the pardon of the King, or to submit to the sentence of the Court. In cases, prosecuted by the Odelsting, in the Court of Impeachment a pardon shall not extend beyond remission of the death penalty.

ARTICLE 21.—The King shall, after having consulted his Norwegian Council of State, choose and appoint all civil, ecclesiastical, and military officers, who shall take an oath to be obedient and faithful to the Constitution and the King, or, if by law relieved from the duty of making oath, solemnly proclaim their fealty to the same. The royal princes shall not hold any civil offices.

ARTICLE 22.—The King, after having obtained the opinion of the Council of State, concerning the same, may