

WHY DOES THE PRESIDENT NEED A CABINET?

Every President has a lot to do---especially a modern-day United States President. He or she must:

- *oversee dealing with foreign countries and the defense of our land.*
- *keep an eye on how our farms are doing.*
- *try to make sure the industry and business of the country are humming along.*
- *make sure that there are jobs for workers in our nation.*
- *see that the laws of the country are carried out---and carried out fairly.*
- *guard our national forest, parks and our resources for the use of all the people.*
- *protect the public from harmful diseases and hazards.*

The list could go on and on-----

How can one person do all this? One "trick" a President has is to delegate jobs. He or she assigns or turns over much of the day-to-day work to others. A good business leader, a principal of a school, or the editor of a newspaper does this, too. They pick qualified people to do certain work, expect them to do their best and then report back on what they have accomplished. The top person, such as the President, will probably make the final decisions. But he or she can't possibly do all the day-to-day work.

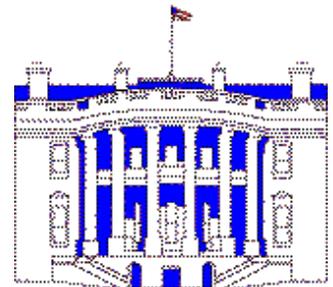
The President of the United States delegates much work to the Cabinet. Each Cabinet member is the head of an executive department of the government. The President meets with his/her Cabinet frequently to hear their reports and their suggestions. Usually, they meet together once a week or every other week. They meet in the Cabinet Room next to the President's Oval Office in the White House West Wing. This room faces the Rose Garden and is a beautiful room furnished with draperies, chandeliers, and leather chairs.

FIRST CABINET

President George Washington developed the Cabinet system by asking the heads of the existing three executive departments and the Attorney General to meet with him on a regular basis to discuss issues of importance and to report on their department's work. The first 4 Cabinet positions (1789) were: Secretary of Treasury, Secretary of State, Secretary of War, and Attorney General.

The formation of departments is mentioned in Article 2 Section 2 of our Constitution "he may require the opinion in writing of the principal officer in each of the executive departments upon any subject relating to the duties of their respective offices---." As the country became larger and

more complicated, other departments were added. At this time, we now have 14 executive departments.



TASKS:

Find the following information:

- 1. Find the names of the men who served in the first Cabinet: (Use a history book or access a web site pertaining to Washington's Presidency.)*
- 2. What is the name of the Cabinet department that replaced Secretary of War - War Department?*
- 3. If you could be chosen for a Cabinet secretary post, which department would you like to supervise? Give 4 reasons for your choice. Answer this question after completing the other research tasks about the Cabinet.*