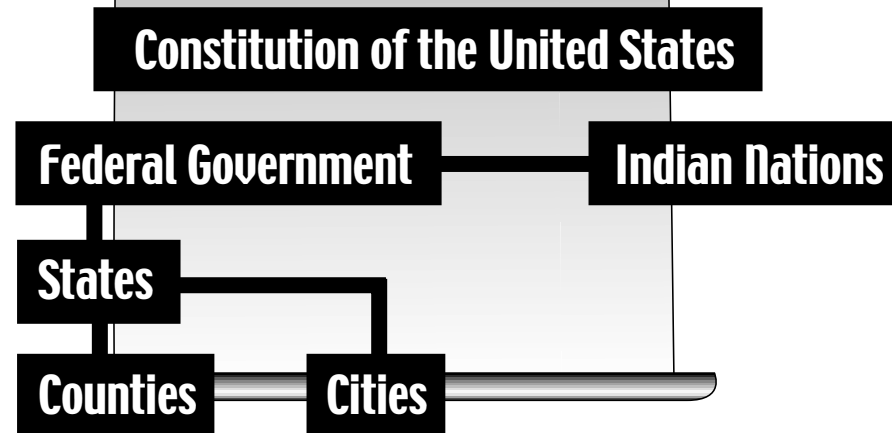


Indian Nations and the American Political System



As this chart illustrates, the relationship between Indian nations and the federal government is based on Indian nations' status as inherent sovereigns. This status means that tribes have a higher legal status than states. States, therefore, exert jurisdiction over tribes only with Congressional approval. This chart also indicates that Indian nations, whose powers spring from their own sovereignty, are only partially under the authority of the U.S Constitution.