Chapter Ten:
The Federalist Era

Contents

10.1 INTRODUCTION 431
  10.1.1 Learning Outcomes 431

10.2 THE WASHINGTON YEARS: IMPLEMENTING A "MORE PERFECT UNION" 433
  10.2.1 Beginning the New Government 433
    The Naming Controversy 434
    The Bill of Rights 434
    Defining the Role of the President 435
  10.2.2 The Road to Economic Recovery and Growth 437
    Dealing with the Debt 437
    Promoting Economic Development 440
  10.2.3 Foreign Policy Challenges 442
    Disputes with the Indians 443
    Disputes with Great Britain and Spain 446
  10.2.4 Before You Move On... 447
    Key Concepts 447
    Test Yourself 448

10.3 THE EMERGENCE OF PARTISAN POLITICS 449
  10.3.1 The Federalists and the Republicans 449
  10.3.2 The French Revolution 451
  10.3.3 The Whiskey Rebellion 454
  10.3.4 The Election of 1796 456
  10.3.5 Before You Move On... 459
    Key Concepts 459
    Test Yourself 459

10.4 THE ADAMS YEARS: FEDERALISTS UNDER FIRE 460
  10.4.1 Adams, Jefferson, and Political Partisanship 461
  10.4.2 The Quasi-War with France 462
  10.4.3 Domestic Turmoil 465
    The Alien Act 466
    The Sedition Act 468
  10.4.4 The Election of 1800 469
  10.4.5 Before You Move On... 472
    Key Concepts 472
    Test Yourself 472

10.5 CONCLUSION 474

10.6 CRITICAL THINKING EXERCISES 475

10.7 KEY TERMS 476

10.8 CHRONOLOGY 477

10.9 BIBLIOGRAPHY 478

10.10 END NOTES 479

ANSWER KEY FOR CHAPTER TEN: THE FEDERALIST ERA 484

If you need this document in another format, please email the University of North Georgia Press at ungpress@ung.edu or call 706-864-1556.

Chapter Ten: The Federalist Era

10.1 INTRODUCTION

After the ratification of the Constitution, a new American government began to take shape in what historians refer to as the Federalist Era. From 1789 to 1801, national leaders grappled with questions relating to implementing the Constitution. The framers had sought to create a more centralized national government to handle domestic and foreign policy issues. They had also wanted to curb what they saw as the excesses of democracy at the state level. Finally, they had hoped to create a "more perfect union" led by disinterested leaders. However, few members of the new government realized how difficult it would be to achieve these goals. The democratic ideals of the Revolutionary Era continued to grow in the 1790s. The American people became quite vocal about their opinions on the issues of the day, and they rarely agreed on the appropriate course of action. Nor, for that matter, did their leaders. Disagreements that had surfaced in Philadelphia about the real purpose of the central government remained.

During the presidencies of George Washington and John Adams, two political parties emerged to represent the broad views of the people on how to interpret the Constitution. The Federalists, the party in power, preferred a strong central government. They saw the federal government as a positive agent for change, which would bring prosperity to all Americans. The Republicans, the opposition party sometimes labeled Democratic-Republicans to distinguish them from the modern Republican Party, preferred a limited central government. They feared a strong government would trample the rights of the people, believing too much power corrupted even the most well-intentioned politicians. Divisions between the two parties marked the Federalist period. Debates arose, primarily over Alexander Hamilton's economic plans and the nation's foreign policy in the wake of the French Revolution. The Federalist Era proved to be a turbulent period because the future of the republic appeared uncertain.

10.1.1 Learning Outcomes

After completing this chapter, you should be able to:

- Explain Alexander Hamilton's vision for the republic and the reasons why his vision garnered such opposition.
- Evaluate the reasons for the emergence of the two-party system and the ideas about political parties held by Americans of this era.

- Compare and contrast the philosophical positions of Federalists and Republicans on the issues of public credit, the bank, tariffs, internal improvements, new lands, and foreign policy.
- Analyze the significance of the French Revolution, the Whiskey Rebellion, the Quasi-War, the Alien and Sedition Acts, and the Virginia and the Kentucky Resolutions on the development of political parties in the 1790s.
- Explain the reasons for the peaceful transfer of power in the election of 1800.

10.2 THE WASHINGTON YEARS: IMPLEMENTING A "MORE PERFECT UNION"

The Federalist Era began during George Washington's presidency as national leaders sought to implement the "more perfect union" they envisioned when drafting the Constitution. The new president hoped to create a strong central government respected both by the American people and by foreign governments. He also looked to outline the strongest possible role for the president given what the Constitution said about the executive branch. During his time in office, Washington and his advisers pursued economic and diplomatic policies that became associated with the Federalist Party. To deal with the country's economic problems, the administration introduced initiatives to promote growth suggested by Alexander Hamilton. To help secure the nation's borders, they sought to remove the threats posed by the Indians as well as the British and the Spanish in the borderlands (the western territories). Although these policies did have positive effects, they also paved the way for the development of an opposition party, the Republicans, before the end of Washington's first term.

10.2.1 Beginning the New Government

On April 23, 1789, George Washington arrived triumphantly in the nation's capital, New York City. A week later, he made his way to Federal Hall through streets filled with well-wishers to take the oath of office. On a portico facing Broad and Wall Streets, Washington swore to uphold the laws of the nation. Afterwards New Yorker Robert Livingston, who administered the oath, bellowed, "Long live George Washington, President of the United States." The crowd roared, and church bells tolled throughout the city. The president then retreated into the Hall to deliver his inaugural address to the members of the First Congress. Historians James McGregor Burns and Susan Dunn suggest Washington "sounded a note of profound elegance" when he mentioned how the preservation of liberty had been placed in the hands of the people.[1]

At the same time, the new president seemed almost apprehensive; he and the assembled members of Congress realized the awesome task they had before them—to put the principles of the Constitution into practice and demonstrate that the republican form of government could be successful. Washington knew he had to serve both as a political and a symbolic leader because the Constitution provided only a sketch of the president's responsibilities. Congress recognized it had to determine the structure of the executive and legislative branches. Initially, members of the national government recognized the necessity of gaining the respect of the American people and foreign governments.[2] In the coming years, their task would become more complicated because they disagreed on how to implement the Constitution.

The Naming Controversy

Though Congress had serious work to attend to in its opening session, the Senate's first major debate focused on how to address the president. John Adams, the vice president, felt it was extremely important to establish a title of respect for the nation's leader. Adams worried that without the proper title, foreign leaders would ridicule the American president. Moreover, he believed that a proper title would help focus the people's attention away from their state governments and toward the federal government.[3] The vice president suggested "His Highness" or "His Most Benign Highness." Other members of the Senate favored an even more honorific title. Eventually, a Senate committee settled on "His Highness, the President of the United States and Protector of their Liberties." However, the House of Representatives leaned against such a lofty title. James Madison and other republican-minded members pushed for a title that did not appear so king-like.[4] Eventually, Congress settled on "Mr. President" in order to show respect without too much deference.

Such a debate might seem trivial, but the choice of terms was important. It signified what type of government the opposing groups favored. The soon-to-be-labeled Federalists, like Adams, saw nothing wrong with aristocratic leadership because it would curb the excesses of democracy and bring stability to the nation. Titles and ceremony would convey strength and bring dignity to the new republic. Moreover, it would show the power of the central government over the states. The upcoming Republicans, like Madison, believed that in a republican society, there should be no sign of monarchy because it would undermine the people's sovereignty. During the debate, Madison argued that simplicity would bring dignity.[5] Congress quickly moved onto other issues, but the ideological issues raised during the naming controversy continued to divide national leaders.

The Bill of Rights

Most of the delegates at the Constitutional Convention of 1787 never thought of including a bill of rights in the new Constitution; however, as the states debated ratification, Anti-Federalists demanded some protection for the people against the excesses of government. Some Federalists agreed to consider amendments designed to protect the people in exchange for the ratification of the Constitution. Thus, the new Congress discussed possible amendments even though many Federalists saw outlining the people's specific rights as unnecessary, and many Anti-Federalists wanted more than cosmetic changes.[6]

James Madison took the lead in drafting the amendments. His decision did not stem from a strong belief in the advisability of amendments; he had promised his fellow Virginians he would support amendments if they elected him to Congress. Madison carefully drafted the amendments so they would not dilute the power of the central government; his proposals focused solely on personal rights. He also managed to convince the House and the Senate to move forward on the proposals. In the end, Congress sent twelve amendments to the states for ratification. According to historian Gordon Wood, two amendments, on congressional appropriation and congressional salaries, "were lost in the initial ratification process." The remaining ten became the Bill of Rights.[7]

The First Amendment protected the freedoms of speech, press, and religion. The Second and Third Amendments—relating to the people's fear of standing armies—granted the right to form citizen militias and to bear arms as well as to protect and limit the government's ability to house soldiers in private homes. The Fourth, Fifth, Sixth, Seventh, and Eighth Amendments defined a citizen's rights when under arrest or in court, including protecting against unreasonable search and seizure as well as cruel and unusual punishment. The Ninth Amendment stated the government could not limit the citizens' rights to only those listed in the Bill of Rights. Finally, the Tenth Amendment indicated that powers not listed in the Constitution remained with the states and the people.

After the ratification of the amendments, Federalists could claim they considered the opposition's request to protect the people's liberties. On the other hand, Anti-Federalists worried that the amendments did not do enough to alter the Constitution on issues of the judiciary and direct taxation. Nevertheless, their addition prompted North Carolina and Rhode Island to ratify the Constitution. Moreover, they allowed Congress to move onto questions relating to the framework of the executive and judicial branches. Congress approved the creation of three executive departments—state, treasury, and war—whose heads would be appointed with the consent of the Senate. It also passed the Judiciary Act of 1789, which set the number of Supreme Court justices at six and created a system of district and circuit courts as well as the position of attorney general.

Defining the Role of the President

In debates at the Constitutional Convention, delegates struggled to define the executive branch. Some preferred the creation of an elected monarchy, whereas others preferred some form of governing council. The expectation that George Washington would become the first president convinced many delegates opposed to a strong executive to agree to a single elected executive. Those delegates trusted in the former general's public virtue and rationality.[8] When Washington took office, he thought about how to shape the role of the president in order to calm suspicions about the chief executive's power. He looked for ways to strike the proper balance between developing respectability and deflecting concerns that he desired to be a monarch, while also looking for ways to develop a strong sense of nationhood. Washington never fully enjoyed being the center of attention, but he willingly sat for numerous portraits in the hopes of cultivating patriotism. Moreover, he promoted internal improvements, the post office, and a national university to bind the fledgling nation together.[9]

Early on, Washington sought advice from John Adams, Alexander Hamilton, John Jay, and James Madison on everything from the style of his residence to the structure of his social calendar. The president integrated some aspects of ceremony into his routine, such as riding in an elaborate coach drawn by four to six white horses and holding weekly receptions for people who wished to meet the president. His administration also carefully prepared his visits to the Northeast in 1789 and to the South in 1791. The president tried to balance the more ceremonial aspects with daily afternoon walks around New York City, and later Philadelphia, and by adopting what he considered plain dress. Although some criticism of the ceremonial aspects of Washington's administration emerged in the press, Thomas Jefferson (recently returned from France) believed the president's moderation worked to preserve the liberty the revolution established.[10]

On a political level, Washington sought to become an energetic leader. He wanted to lay the foundation for a strong chief executive for his successors; moreover, he thought a "steady hand" should guide the nation.[11] According to James McGregor Burns and Susan Burns, the president believed "accountability, diligence, and speed" were the marks of a good government. Washington was a hands-on leader who used the strengths of his cabinet officers to his advantage. He chose Thomas Jefferson as the secretary of state, Alexander Hamilton as the secretary of treasury, Henry Knox as the secretary of war, and Edmund Randolph as the attorney general. Washington also instructed his cabinet secretaries "to deliberate maturely, but to execute promptly."[12]

Washington deferred to Congress only on small matters because he wanted to create a strong presidency. When it came to an issue of executive authority, he rarely gave in to Congress. For example, when Congress debated the creation of executive departments in 1789, Washington, with the help of James Madison, fought hard to protect the president's right to remove cabinet officers. Some congressmen maintained that because the Constitution granted the Senate the right to consent to presidential appointments, it also granted members the right to consent to removal. Madison, however, successfully convinced the House that no president could effectively control his own administration if he could not remove poorly performing officials. The Senate was not so easily convinced; they wanted to protect their rights when it came to appointments. Vice President Adams cast the tie-breaking vote that preserved the president's right of removal and his independence of action. In the end, as Gordon Wood points out, Washington "created an independent role for the president and made it the dominant figure in the government."[13]

10.2.2 The Road to Economic Recovery and Growth

Throughout the 1780s, economic issues—namely the war-related debts incurred by the state and the national governments—plagued the country. The total debt hovered at just under $78 million. Political leaders realized the necessity of dealing with public credit in order to develop greater respect for the new government. If the nation did not at a minimum make interest payments, then it would be hard for Americans to obtain credit at home or abroad. Not long after George Washington chose Alexander Hamilton as the secretary of treasury, the House of Representatives requested the secretary of treasury draw up plans to address the nation's financial problems. Hamilton's reports on public credit, a national bank, and manufacturing became a blueprint for the country's future economic growth and for a strong central government. At the same time, the debates surrounding Hamilton's vision further divided Washington, Hamilton, Adams, Jefferson, Madison, and others. Questions about the government's role in the economy clearly divided those who supported strong central authority and those who supported states' rights.

Dealing with the Debt

Alexander Hamilton first set out to deal with the debt, most of which stemmed from the effort to win independence. The Confederation Congress borrowed approximately $12 million from foreign governments and banks and approximately $42 million from the American people through a variety of bills, notes, and certificates. During the 1780s, the Confederation government found it difficult to make payments to creditors because it did not have an independent revenue source, so it borrowed more money just to make the interest payments. Meanwhile, the states also borrowed another $25 million from the people. Some of the states managed to pay their debt; others struggled because their residents balked at the high tax rates needed to fund the debt.

When the Washington administration began, no one seriously doubted the need to pay the foreign debt, but the question of the domestic debt was more complicated. Cash-poor farmers and merchants had sold their government certificates to speculators for much less than their face value in the 1780s. Some American leaders thought the government should pay the debt in full regardless of who held the certificates. Others thought the government should consider scaling it down or at least distinguishing between the original holders and the speculators. Furthermore, some leaders argued the federal government should assume the state debts, meaning it would take responsibility for paying those debts. Others argued such a move would discriminate against the states that had already met their financial obligations.

On January 14, 1790, Hamilton sent the Public Report on Credit to Congress. He outlined a proposal to pay the debt and to provide a base of capital for industrial projects. The secretary of treasury argued the government should pay the face value or full amount to the current holders of government certificates. Full payment would send a message to future creditors that the government could meet its obligations; paying anything less would be a breach of contract. Hamilton also proposed to assume the state debts in order to build loyalty to the national government. If the federal government took responsibility for paying all the debt, then the states could eliminate most of their taxes and thereby avoid the domestic turmoil of the 1780s. He further proposed the government should fund or refinance the debt by issuing new securities to certificate holders on which it would make annual interest payments. In theory, the government would also work to pay off the entire debt. For Hamilton, however, retiring the debt was not a priority.[14]

Hamilton based his approach to public credit on the British model where the wealthiest citizens held most of the securities. When the government made annual interest payments from tax revenues, those citizens continued to invest in the government. In turn, they could use their securities as a form of capital (currency) to fund internal improvements and business ventures. To Hamilton, the plan was economically sound and politically wise. He believed the key way to develop the people's loyalty to the United States was to focus on the self-interest of the elite, which in turn would bring economic benefits to all citizens. The president, who supported development to promote nationalism, approved of the secretary of treasury's plan as did most other nationally-minded Congress representatives.[15]

However, some in Congress seemed less convinced about the merits of Hamilton's plan. James Madison saw numerous problems with the proposal, which surprised Hamilton since the two men had collaborated on the *Federalist Papers* supporting a strong central government. In 1790, Madison still had nationalist tendencies in that he supported paying the debt. However, he pushed for greater equity in handling the domestic debt. He hated to see speculators benefit more than the nation's veterans. He also did not want to see states that funded their debts pay more than their share. Though Madison made an impassioned plea to protect the interests of the soldiers who fought for independence, the House ultimately sided with Hamilton on the question of paying the current holders of the securities the full value.[16]

The question of assumption took longer to decide. Madison maintained that the proposal did an injustice to states like Virginia, Maryland, and Georgia. They had paid their debts, but now the government would tax their citizens to fund the debts of states like Massachusetts, Connecticut, and South Carolina. If Madison could not stop assumption altogether, then he wanted "settlement" before assumption to prorate the amount the states would have to contribute to the refinanced national debt. In assessing Hamilton's proposals, Madison began to have reservations about the central government he helped create in the Constitution. He still believed in the importance of a national government, but he also worried the states might have to give up too much of their independence. Others who disagreed with assumption went so far as to suggest Hamilton wanted to do away with the states altogether. By June, the House and the Senate had deadlocked; most northerners were for assumption and most southerners were against it.[17]

Thomas Jefferson sided with Madison, but he also realized reaching a compromise was important for the future of the republic. Jefferson had a somewhat disturbing conversation with Hamilton, who believed the failure of his financial plan would lead to the disintegration of the union. So, Jefferson invited Hamilton and Madison to his home one night to discuss a solution. The compromise stemmed from a suggestion earlier made by Virginian Richard Bland Lee, who had linked resolution of the assumption bill with the future location of the nation's capital. Many southern legislators wanted to move the capital away from New York City so it would be closer to the South. It would also separate the nation's political and financial interests, which they believed would curb the power of northern elites.[18]

The meeting led to the Compromise of 1790—where Madison agreed not to fight assumption, and Hamilton agreed to support moving the capital to a site on the Potomac River. In July, Congress passed the Residence Bill and the Assumption Bill. The first stated the capital would move to Philadelphia for ten years while the government constructed the Potomac site carved out of Virginia and Maryland. The second made provisions for the federal government to assume the state debts.[19] While the two sides reached an agreement, the debate over public credit further divided the nation's leaders into factions. Jefferson and Madison saw the government more as an umpire who meditated the tensions between the states; Washington and Hamilton viewed the government as a player deeply involved in the fiscal affairs of the states. Hamilton's other reports only further exacerbated those tensions.[20]

Promoting Economic Development

For Alexander Hamilton, dealing with public credit was only the first step in securing the economic future of the United States. His Report on the Bank (1790) and Report on Manufactures (1791) promoted a greater connection between the federal government and the country's manufacturing interests. Hamilton believed his plans would strengthen the relationship between the country's agricultural and manufacturing sectors. He thought neither could prosper without the other; moreover, all Americans would prosper from the expansion of commerce. Trade brought revenue to the people and to the government, which in turn would make the United States a powerful nation. Economic development would also help secure liberty because revenue from tariffs would lessen the need to tax private property directly. The secretary of treasury, however, recognized his proposals likely would meet resistance because much of the population feared commerce.[21]

The Report on the Bank detailed the importance of creating a national bank. Hamilton proposed Congress charter the Bank of the United States for a period of twenty years and capitalize it at $10 million. Once chartered, the government would own 20 percent of the bank's stock. The bank would sell the remaining 80 percent to private individuals. Investors had to pay 25 percent of the value in specie, but the remaining 75 percent could be in government securities. The bank would also facilitate the payment of federal taxes and tariffs, serve as the government depository and government creditor, help regulate the state banks, and work to create paper money by issuing bank notes in the form short-term loans to merchants. Hamilton felt the creation of paper money served as the bank's most important function. Since the bank would exchange its notes for specie, the notes could change hands without losing value, making them an acceptable substitute for coin.[22]

Since most Americans had very little experience with banks, Hamilton's proposal was a novel solution to the nation's economic issues for its time. Southerners especially doubted the need for any financial institution that might concentrate the nation's economic power in the hands of only a few people. When Congress began to debate the bank bill in 1791, James Madison once again led the opposition. He argued against the concentration of power, which reminded him of the British monarchy. Instead, he suggested chartering several regional banks. Furthermore, he doubted the constitutionality of the measure. Madison promoted a limited interpretation of the Constitution, often referred to as strict construction. The bank charter did not propose to collect taxes or borrow money for the general welfare of the people. Therefore, it was not a necessary function of the government. Madison concluded that the measure "was condemned by the silence of the Constitution."[23]

Hamilton's supporters in Congress such as Fisher Ames, Elbridge Gerry, and Theodore Sedgwick effectively negated Madison's arguments in the House and Senate debates. Ames, for example, suggested that not only was the bank a proper function of the government, but that much of what Congress and the president had done in the previous two years relied on a broad interpretation of powers granted to the government. To him, the "necessary and proper" clause (Article I, Section 8) established the "doctrine of implied powers."[24] The bank bill passed through both chambers in February, leaving the president to decide whether to sign or veto the measure.

Washington very much respected Madison's judgment and thus, according to Gordon Wood, "was deeply perplexed by the issue of constitutionality." So, he asked Secretary of State Thomas Jefferson, who recently returned from Paris where he had served as the minister of France, and Attorney General Edmond Randolph for advice. Both men opposed the bank and in their written responses relied on the provisions of the Tenth Amendment. Impressed by their arguments, the president asked Madison to draft his veto message. However, he also invited Hamilton to respond to the criticism leveled by his fellow cabinet members. The secretary of treasury laid out a case for broad construction, arguing the bank was vital to the country's economic interests. In the end, Hamilton successfully convinced Washington the bank was both necessary and proper; the president signed the bill. Once the Bank of the United States—headquartered in Philadelphia—began selling its securities, Washington expressed pleasure at how quickly the value of those securities had risen. It suggested the people had confidence in the government and had economic resources.[25]

The Report on Manufactures proposed four different measures to support domestic industry: (1) Congress should protect the nation's infant industries through a protective tariff; (2) Congress should pay bounties to individuals who started businesses vital to the national interest; (3) Congress should fund a national transportation system of roads and canals, which would link industry and agriculture together; and (4) Congress should support industry through the encouragement of the labor of women and children. In the early 1790s, American farmers produced a surplus of goods. Thus, Hamilton wanted to create a domestic market for their surplus. If the nation started to industrialize, its laborers could be the market for much of what the farmers produced. In turn, those farmers could buy American-made manufactured goods. Such steps would make the nation less dependent on Europe. At the same time, Hamilton believed in the importance of maintaining some foreign trade since he planned to use a protective tariff or import tax to fund economic development.[26]

Hamilton had much less success convincing the president or Congress on the necessity of his proposal supporting domestic manufacturing. Although Washington adopted an increasingly urban focus, as James McGregor Burns and Susan Dunn maintain, he still had "land in his blood." He envisioned a balance between agriculture and industry in the United States, and yet he seemed incapable of giving up his belief that self-sufficient yeoman farmers would make the nation great. Consequently, he deemed the proposals unnecessary in 1792. Before he left office, Washington did recommend Congress consider support for domestic manufacturing to better prepare for times of war.[27]

Meanwhile, Congress began to debate enacting bounties or rewards for the fishing industry and revising the tariff. Although the fishing measure passed, Madison managed to substitute "allowance" for "bounty," thereby undermining Hamilton's plan to promote industry. To Madison, Congress could grant an allowance under the Constitution because it dealt with a deficiency. A bounty, on the other hand, could expand the role of the government beyond the vision of the framers.[28] As for the tariff, Congress had twice approved an import tax in 1789 and 1790. The measures raised revenue for the federal government, but they did not promote industry. While Congress raised the tariff rates in 1792, it did not adopt the principle of protectionism as Hamilton had hoped. In the short run, the federal government refrained from supporting domestic manufacturing. Hamilton's vision simply was ahead of its time. In the long run, Hamilton's proposals provided a guide for industrialization in the nineteenth century.

10.2.3 Foreign Policy Challenges

Beyond the efforts to define the role of the president and to promote economic recovery, George Washington had to deal with several foreign policy challenges relating to the settlement of the borderlands. The Indians living on that land, as well as the British and the Spanish governments, threatened the territorial integrity of the United States. The Washington administration sought to remove these threats. Washington saw the failure to resolve the issues on the frontier as problematic for the nation's security and economic development. Both relied on the peaceful settlement of western land and the ability to navigate the Mississippi River. The president relied on the military and the diplomatic corps to achieve his goals.[29]

At the same time, Washington had to define the role the legislative branch would play in foreign policy. The Constitution indicated the Senate would advise and consent on all treaties with foreign governments while the House would vote on the necessary appropriations for treaties. In 1789, Washington sought the Senate's input on a treaty with the Southern

Indian tribes. John Adams read the treaty more than once to the assembled members and then the debate over each provision began. Meanwhile, Washington waited impatiently in the chamber, apparently making some of the senators uncomfortable. When one senator suggested submitting the treaty to a subcommittee for study, the president became visibly upset. He expected their approval would come quickly, not that he would have to submit the treaty to serious study. Based on the experience, the president opted to drop the advisement role of the Senate. Thenceforward, the Senate only consented when it voted to ratify completed treaties. In 1796, the House sought to weigh in on the provisions of Jay's Treaty with Great Britain. However, Washington refused Madison's attempt to expand the role the House played in treaty making.[30]

Disputes with the Indians

The Treaty of Paris ended the Revolutionary War and ceded western lands, and the frontier problems that went along with them, to the United States. In 1787, the Northwest Ordinance had laid out a blueprint for the expansion of the nation and set the tone for how the government would deal with Indians in the expansion process, proclaiming that "the utmost good faith shall always be observed towards the Indians; their lands and property shall never be taken from them without their consent...unless in just and lawful wars authorized by Congress; but laws founded in justice and humanity, shall from time to time be made for preventing wrongs being done to them."[31] Many saw this as an indication that the United States recognized the inevitability of expansion, but desired "expansion with honor." However, these lofty ideas and language of "expansion with honor" were negated when the document called for towns and cities to be laid out in the places where Indian lands had been "extinguished."

The new government sought to control frontier violence, settle the western lands peacefully, and promote the territorial integrity of the United States. One way of accomplishing these goals was the adoption of legislation that clearly defined the role of the federal government in foreign policy with Indians. From 1790 to 1834, Congress passed a series of acts, known as the Indian Intercourse Acts, which prohibited unregulated trade between Indians and Americans. The Acts established that only the federal government could license traders to buy Indian lands. This was confirmed by the Supreme Court in the 1823 *Johnson v. M'Intosh* case, which established that private individuals were not authorized to purchase land from Indians.[32] The Act further regulated trade by setting up a series of authorized trading posts, or "factories," where all trade between Indians and Americans was to take place. Ostensibly, the factories were to protect

Indians from being defrauded by private individuals; in actuality, the United States often secured substantial tracts of Indian lands by trading access to the factories for land.

Over the course of the 1780s, the United States government strived to end frontier tensions by negotiating a series of treaties with some of the nations of the Ohio Valley. However, hostilities between settlers and Indians continued to grow as more Americans pushed westward. Matters came to a head in 1785-1786, when representatives of many of the nations of the Ohio Valley met to establish a group that would present a united front to the United States. This became known as the Miami Confederacy or the Northwest Confederacy. Participating groups included the Miami, Shawnee, Wyandot, Ojibwe, Lenape, and Kickapoo, among others. In a series of meetings, the Confederacy declared that the United States would have to deal with them as a group, not as individual tribes. They declared the Ohio River to be the boundary between the lands of the settlers and the lands of the Indians. Furthermore, the group declared that it would not honor treaties signed by only one individual or one group, which they referred to as "partial treaties." The Confederacy was supported by a number of British agents still present in the region. These agents sold weapons and ammunition to the Indians, encouraged attacks on American settlers, and did much to increase tensions between the Indians of the Ohio Valley and the United States. The mid-1780s were marked by a series of disputes, including raids on American settlements and Indian towns alike. Hundreds died and mistrust grew, continuing the pattern of frontier violence that sparked the Northwest Indian War (1785-1795).

In 1790, war began in earnest when Washington and Secretary of War Henry Knox authorized a major campaign into the Ohio Valley, specifically calling for campaigns into the Miami and Shawnee lands. Some 1,500 troops, under the command of General Josiah Harmar, assembled to march into the Valley. Harmar planned to attack Kekionga, one of the largest villages in the region. His plans were thwarted by Miami leader Little Turtle, who evacuated the village before Harmar could attack, then ambushed and defeated Harmar's troops, killing almost 200 soldiers. The following year, General Arthur St. Clair led the army back into the Valley. St. Clair's troops, untrained and ill-equipped for war, were quickly overrun by Little Turtle's Confederacy forces. The defeat was devastating, resulting in tremendously high casualties for the young American army and nation; some 630 officers and soldiers were killed, the highest casualties ever in an Indian war in American history.

The defeat was a triumph for the Confederacy. Many of the regional and Confederacy leaders, including leaders of the powerful Iroquois nation, wanted to take advantage of this strong position and negotiate with the

Americans while the Confederacy had the upper hand. This idea was met with resistance by the majority of the Confederacy, who maintained that the Ohio River remained the absolute boundary between Indian and American lands. They would accept nothing less.

In the meantime, Congress laid plans to fund a large army. They appropriated one million dollars to create the Legion of the United States, a well-trained group created expressly to fight Indian wars. Under the command of General "Mad" Anthony Wayne, the Legion arrived in the Ohio Valley in late 1793 to find the Northwest Confederacy greatly weakened by fighting between the factions. Wayne and his troops built Fort Recovery on the site of St. Clair's defeat. Little Turtle led an investigation of the newly arrived army and an unsuccessful attack against the fort; afterwards, he argued to the Confederacy that the Legion could not be defeated and advised a truce. The Confederacy responded by replacing Little Turtle with Shawnee leader Blue Jacket. The war culminated with the Battle of Fallen Timbers. Although both sides only suffered light casualties, the battle was significant. Blue Jacket had chosen to station his forces at a fortified area marked by trees that had blown over in a storm. The spot was close to Fort Miami, held by the British who traded with local groups and had supplied and supported the Confederacy. After losing the battle and abandoning the battlefield, Blue Jacket and his men fell back to Fort Miami, anticipating that they would find refuge there. The British commander refused to open the gates to the Confederacy troops, unwilling to start a war with the Americans. For many of the Northwest Confederacy, this lack of support by the British was even more discouraging than the loss of the battle.

The Northwest Indian War was concluded with the 1795 Treaty of Greenville. Little Turtle, one of the representatives of the Northwest Confederacy, delivered a speech defending the sovereignty of Native Americans and called for peace with the United States. The treaty ceded about two-thirds of the Ohio Valley to the United States and parts of modern-day Indiana, including the sites of the future cities of Detroit, Chicago, and Toledo. In return, the Confederacy was guaranteed lands beyond the "Greenville Treaty Line," which more or less followed the Cuyahoga River. Although the Treaty of Greenville promised a "lasting boundary," settlers pushed into Indian lands a few years later.

The Northwest Indian War left a lasting legacy in several ways. As the first significant post-revolutionary military engagement, the decisive defeat of St. Clair and the army proved a real test of the young nation. Moreover, Congress was forced to raise a great deal of money in the midst of the debt crisis to fund the war and the newly created Legion of the United States. Washington's administration and Congress were also delving into uncharted waters as they sought to establish the primacy of the federal government in Indian affairs. Finally, the Treaty of Greenville established the practice of paying yearly annuities of money and goods to nations that granted the United States some role in tribal affairs, a practice which continued and grew in the later Indian Wars.

Disputes with Great Britain and Spain

Both Great Britain and Spain complicated the Washington administration's dealings with the Indians. The major European powers saw the fledgling United States as a weak nation in the 1780s and continued to do so in the 1790s. In 1783, Britain had lost the thirteen colonies and the land between the Appalachians and the Mississippi. Although it still controlled Canada, the boundary with Canada and the United States was unclear in places. At the same time, Britain returned Florida to Spain, and Spain claimed the Tennessee River as the border between the United States and New Spain. As a result, the United States faced threats on all of its borders. The British government encouraged the Indians to unite and resist American settlement. Moreover, the British severely discriminated against American merchants who wanted to sell to the British West Indies. To make matters worse, the Spanish government closed the Mississippi to American traffic. Spanish agents then encouraged settlers in Kentucky and Tennessee to break away from the United States so they could use the Mississippi to ship their produce to market.[33] While Washington opted to rely on the army to resolve issues with the Indians, he turned to his diplomats to handle relations with Britain and Spain.

Tensions mounted between the Americans and the British in 1793, when France (during its revolution) declared war on all monarchies, including Britain. The United States hoped to remain neutral in the conflict, but the need to trade in Europe complicated matters since Britain blockaded the continent. The Washington administration prepared for war but hoped to avoid such an outcome. The chance for settlement came when Washington received word the British intended to ease their seizures of American ships in the West Indies. He sent John Jay, the chief justice, to London in 1794 as a special envoy. He instructed Jay to secure the evacuation of the northwestern forts on U.S. territory in the Great Lakes region still occupied by the British, to win reparations for seized American ships, to secure compensation as for slaves seized by the British during the war, and to negotiate a commercial treaty granting Americans trade with the British West Indies.[34]

Jay's Treaty (formally known as the Treaty of Amity, Commerce, and Navigation) did not live up to Washington's expectations, because the chief justice only managed to secure the evacuation of the forts and damages for the seized ships. Nevertheless, the president sent the treaty to the Senate for ratification. When the public learned of the contents of the treaty, hostility to settlement mounted because so many Americans distrusted the British and favored the French in their ongoing conflict. In spite of the public reaction, the Senate approved the treaty by the barest margin in 1795. Washington signed for two reasons: he thought it would calm the political tensions, and he thought the agreement might pave the way for future improvements in the Anglo-American relationship.[35] The president turned out to be wrong on both accounts.

The possibility of a treaty with Great Britain did, however, encourage Spain to negotiate an agreement with the United States. Washington sent William Short to Madrid in 1792, but Spanish negotiators seemed more interested in expanding their New World Empire than in making concessions to the Americans. Meanwhile, western settlers in Kentucky and Pennsylvania criticized Washington for doing nothing to assist them. Just as in the 1780s, it appeared as though the states might break from the American republic if the situation was not resolved. So, Washington sent Thomas Pinckney to Madrid in 1795. Spanish negotiators decided to conclude an agreement before the British and Americans could collaborate to erode their possessions in the Americas. In Pinckney's Treaty (formally known as the Treaty of San Lorenzo), the Spanish accepted the 31st parallel (much farther south than the Tennessee River) as the border and agreed to the free navigation of the Mississippi River. The Senate ratified, and the president signed the treaty in 1796.[36] Jay's Treaty and Pinckney's Treaty secured the American borders in the West, but they hardly ended the political factionalism throughout the nation.

10.2.4 Before You Move On...

Key Concepts

In 1789, the Washington administration and Congress hoped to put the principles of the Constitution into practice and demonstrate that the republican form of government could be successful—to truly create a "more perfect union." Congressional leaders followed through with promises made in 1787 and 1788 to add a Bill of Rights to the Constitution.

The executive and legislative branches also made strides in promoting the economy. Hamilton's suggestions on public credit and the bank helped resolve the financial problems of the Confederation period. Madison eventually agreed to support a measure to fund the war debt in full as well as to assume the state debts in exchange for moving the nation's capital to a site on the Potomac River. Hamilton's supporters in Congress also convinced enough members to support a measure to create the Bank of the United States, to hold government deposits and issue currency.

The administration also sought to control frontier violence, settle the western lands peacefully, and promote the territorial integrity of the United States. Greenville's Treaty, ending the Northwest Indian War, ceded Indian land in the Ohio Valley to the United States and reserved the land beyond the treaty line for the Indians. Jay's Treaty and Pinckney's Treaty proved that the newly-constituted central government had the strength to deal effectively with foreign governments to resolve its trade and border issues.

In spite of Washington's efforts to curtail political differences, domestic and foreign policy issues began to divide political leaders into two factions by the end of Washington's first term in office. Increasingly, Federalists (who favored a strong central government) and Republicans (who favored a limited central government) disagreed on how to interpret the Constitution.

Test Yourself

1. The Bill of Rights did all of the following except
    a. constitute the first ten amendments to the Constitution.
    b. appease some initial critics of the Constitution.
    c. safeguard freedoms such as press, speech, and assembly.
    d. settle all questions about federal versus state authority.

2. Madison and Jefferson objected to the national bank in the 1790s primarily because
    a. they believed in strict construction when interpreting the Constitution.
    b. they felt it was not powerful enough to meet the nation's financial needs.
    c. it would cost the government too much money.
    d. it would be located in New York rather than Virginia.

3. The Treaty of Greenville was an agreement between the United States and
    a. Great Britain.
    b. Indians on the northwest frontier.
    c. Spain.
    d. Canada.

4. Jay's Treaty, ratified by the Senate in 1795,
    a. guaranteed the right of Americans to trade in the West Indies.
    b. forced Hamilton's resignation from the cabinet.
    c. infuriated American people for its concessions to the British.
    d. was most strongly opposed in New England.

Click here to see answers

10.3 THE EMERGENCE OF PARTISAN POLITICS

When the framers wrote the Constitution, they very much hoped they could avoid the emergence of permanent political parties. However, two distinct factions appeared by the mid-1790s. The Federalists coalesced in support of Alexander Hamilton's vision for the nation early in the Washington administration. The Republicans, or Democratic-Republicans, formed in opposition to Hamilton's vision. The opposition, led by Thomas Jefferson and James Madison, took longer to develop, largely because no national leader could really conceive of a legitimate counter-party to the group in power. Most agreed any conflict would not strengthen the nation, but lead to disunion. In the 1790s, partisan politics was unsettling because people on both sides thought the future of the republic was at stake. The French Revolution and the Whiskey Rebellion helped contribute to the creation of the first party system in the United States, which in turn set the stage for the nation's first partisan presidential election in 1796.

10.3.1 The Federalists and the Republicans

The nationally-minded leaders who went to the Constitutional Convention in 1787 all agreed about the need to curb the excesses of democracy at the state level and create a stronger central government. Once the Washington administration began to outline its domestic and foreign policies, ideological divisions resurfaced among the president's advisers and among members of Congress. Soon those divisions spread to the wider public through the partisan newspapers. During the debates over Hamilton's plans for economic growth, two rival Philadelphia papers, John Fenno's *Gazette of the United States* and Philip Freneau's *National Gazette*, published essays by Hamilton, Madison, and others under pen names discussing the proposals. Both editors took the opportunity not just to address the political issues, but to sharpen the divide between those who supported Hamilton and those who did not. Soon more partisan newspapers appeared to help provide a political identity to voters during the infancy of the two-party system in the United States.[37]

While still hostile to the idea of political parties, people around the country began speaking of the Federalists and the Republicans by 1792. The emergence of the Democratic-Republican clubs in 1793 further exacerbated the political divisions. The clubs, modeled on the radical Jacobin clubs in France, pledged to monitor the government and support opposition candidates. They communicated with one another much as the Committees of Correspondence had in the pre-revolution years, frightening many national leaders—Federalist and Republican alike. No elite could yet envision a truly democratic future for the nation where all citizens had an equal say in the government.[38]

At heart, Federalists and Republicans disagreed about how much power to vest in the central government or, conversely, about how capable the people were in governing themselves. Federalists Alexander Hamilton and John Adams believed promoting social stability would best preserve the people's liberty. Furthermore, the nation could only achieve stability if the government promoted the self-interest of the wealthiest farmers, merchants, and manufacturers. Federalists believed the government should serve the interests of the few; doing so would provide benefits for all and would create a strong national union. Federalists never opposed popular elections, but they felt once the people voted, they should leave the important decisions to those they elected. As evidenced by their position on the creation of a national bank, Federalists supported broad construction when it came to interpreting the Constitution. They took a wide view of the necessary and proper clause, seeing things like federally funded internal improvements as a legitimate government function.[39]

Republicans Thomas Jefferson and James Madison believed any attempt to cater to minority interests would undermine the people's liberty; government should work to support the interests of ordinary citizens—the majority. Any other course of action would put the nation back on the road to monarchy. Republicans spoke primarily for agricultural interests and values. They distrusted bankers, cared little for commerce or manufacturing, and believed that freedom and democracy flourished best in a rural society composed of yeoman farmers. They felt little need for a strong central government; it would only become a source of oppression. They wanted the central government to handle foreign policy and foreign trade. However, everything else should be left to the states. Moreover, Republicans supported strict construction when it came to interpreting the Constitution. Reading the Constitution literally would limit the opportunities the government had to undermine citizen's rights.[40]

As the two parties formed, they attracted a diverse group of voters. Federalists attracted wealthy citizens with commercial and manufacturing interests; people who worked in the Atlantic seaports also found their agenda more appealing. Dependent on foreign trade for their livelihood, many artisans wanted to see the government pursue economic development. The Federalists were strongest in the North, but they also had a presence in Virginia, North Carolina, and South Carolina. Republicans tended to attract wealthy landowners tied to plantation-based slavery. At the same time, ordinary farmers who wanted to see the economy remain tied to agriculture and less prosperous merchants who wanted to challenge the control of entrenched leaders supported the Republicans. Finally, the Republicans attracted many new immigrants with radical political ideas who fled England, Ireland, and other places in Europe. The Republicans were strongest in the South, as well as the western areas of Pennsylvania and New York.[41] Since both parties developed support based on economic outlook and sectional interest, the coalitions remained fluid in the 1790s as they tried to broaden their constituencies. Therefore, partisan politics played a role in how the government responded to the French Revolution and the Whiskey Rebellion.

10.3.2 The French Revolution

The French Revolution began just as the new American government took shape in 1789. Most Americans celebrated the French people's attempt to overthrow their aristocratic leaders and create a republic. They believed that their own effort to oust the British inspired the French cause for liberty. French actions, such as declaring three days of official mourning when Benjamin Franklin died in 1790 and extending honorary citizenship to George Washington, James Madison, and Alexander Hamilton, encouraged the American people to express sympathy for the Revolution. As Federalist John Marshall later noted, "We are all strongly attached to France…I sincerely believed human liberty to depend…on the success of the French Revolution."[42] However, two events in 1793 began to divide the American people as well as members of their government.

When the Reign of Terror began with the execution of King Louis XVI, many Federalists questioned the liberty and equality of the French effort. These leaders thought the people had gone too far; legitimate revolution descended into popular anarchy. Federalists concluded that any attempt to encourage the French would destroy the American experiment. Alexander Hamilton suggested the Americans had fought for liberty, while the French fought for "licentiousness." Republicans seemed undisturbed by the turn of events in France. They saw the violence as evidence of the people casting off the evils of monarchism. Thomas Jefferson and James Madison maintained the fate of France's nobility served a "greater cause." Citizens across the country expressed their sympathy for the French cause by wearing tricolored ribbons and singing revolutionary songs.[43]

More importantly, France began a war against Great Britain in February. To underscore their revolutionary effort, the French hoped to destroy all monarchies. Based on the Treaty of Alliance, the Americans had an obligation to assist the French. Under the terms of the treaty, each country pledged to defend the other in the event of a war with Great Britain. George Washington had to decide whether to live up to the commitments made in 1778.[44] Regardless of their opinions about the French Revolution, his advisers thought the United States should be neutral in the war. Secretary of State Jefferson, although he did not want to take any action to harm the French, did not want to jeopardize American security. Secretary of Treasury Hamilton did not want to aid the French because it might interrupt his economic vision, which relied on good trade relations with the British.[45]

On April 22, 1793, Washington issued a proclamation stating the United States "should with sincerity and good faith adopt and pursue a conduct friendly and impartial toward the belligerent Powers." Moreover, the government would punish Americans citizens for "abetting hostilities" or carrying contraband. Although the proclamation did not include the word neutrality, the president hoped the message would convey the Americans' desire to stay out of the European conflict.[46] Federalists tended to support Washington's position, whereas Republicans widely lambasted the neutrality policy. Immediately after it went into effect, Jefferson distanced himself from the policy, and Madison called it an "unfortunate error."[47]

The neutrality proclamation also sparked a constitutional debate on the president's authority to make foreign policy. Writing anonymously, Hamilton and Madison debated the issue in the partisan papers. Hamilton maintained the president had the authority to declare neutrality since the Constitution gave the executive department the responsibility to conduct business with foreign nations. Furthermore, he argued the provisions of the 1778 treaty only covered defensive wars, and France had launched an offensive war against Britain. In response, Madison opted to speak only about the larger constitutional issues raised by the proclamation, as opposed to addressing the policy itself. Since Congress had the power to declare war and ratify treaties, he argued it also had the power to declare neutrality. Furthermore, Madison suggested the opposition defined executive authority by looking to "*royal prerogatives* in the *British government*."[48]

As Washington and his advisers mulled over neutrality, they also had to decide whether the government should receive the new minister, Edmond Charles Genet, when he arrived from France. Hamilton opposed receiving Genet unless the administration also indicated that the United States had suspended all treaties made with the former French government. He feared recognizing France would be the same as saying the United States backed their war. Jefferson, who had more affection for the French people and their cause because of his time in Paris, supported receiving Genet, which amounted to recognizing the French government. He argued against suspending the alliance because doing so would undermine the decision to recognize the government. On this issue, the president sided with Jefferson.[49] However, no one in the Washington administration could have foreseen the problems Citizen Genet would cause.

The French government sent Genet to the United States with three goals: encourage the Americans to live up to the provisions of the 1778 treaty; secure the right to outfit privateers (privately owned warships commissioned to prey on enemy ships) in American ports; and gain American assistance in undermining British and Spanish rule in the New World. When Genet arrived in Charleston, South Carolina, well-wishers met his ship and those good feelings continued. As he made the journey to Philadelphia, everywhere he went people showered him with praise and collected money for the Revolution. Across the country, he met with Democratic-Republican clubs. Moreover, he recruited soldiers to launch an attack on New Spain and sailors to work as privateers. Genet also turned the *Little Sarah* (a captured British ship held by the French in Philadelphia) into the *Little Democrat* and sent it out to attack British ships, something he told the Washington administration he would not do. To make matters worse, Genet threatened to take his cause to the American people if their government complained.[50]

At first, Thomas Jefferson had encouraged Genet's efforts to drum up support for the war. But no matter how much Jefferson wanted to help the French, the *Little Democrat* incident forced him to approach Washington about Genet's threats to appeal directly to the American people. When the president found out, he was furious. At heart, he worried how other European governments would view the United States if it allowed Genet to dictate policy. Washington's cabinet agreed the Americans had to request Genet's recall. Jefferson sent a letter to the French government detailing Genet's activities, taking care to separate those actions from the intentions of the government. The letter also underscored the American desire to continue its friendly relationship with the French.[51] France recalled their ambassador, but Genet sought asylum in the United States. Washington granted the request because he recognized Genet would likely become another victim of the Reign of Terror if he returned.

The Citizen Genet Affair further exacerbated the growing tensions between the Federalists and the Republicans. The Federalists pounced on Genet's blunders. They sought not only to build support for neutrality, but to also undermine the Republicans. Across the country, Federalists sponsored resolutions supporting the Washington administration; they also indicated their opponents were dangerous radicals. Not to be outdone, the Republicans suggested their opponents sought to create discord between France and the

United States in order to restore a British-like monarchy in the United States. Partisan newspaper editors outdid themselves in attacking the opposition. Only respect for George Washington, says Gordon Wood, kept the partisan feuding from becoming completely unmanageable.[52] However, by the time John Jay went to London to deal with problems between the United States and Great Britain (some of which were caused by the Anglo-French conflict) the American people had clearly divided along pro-French and pro-British lines.

10.3.3 The Whiskey Rebellion

The Federalists and the Republicans found another reason to worry about the opposition's intentions: the Whiskey Rebellion. In 1790, the Washington administration sought to levy a direct tax on the American people to help defray the costs of Hamilton's financial program. The secretary of treasury knew indirect import duties would not entirely cover the costs of putting the nation on solid financial footing, so he proposed an excise tax on distilled spirits, which the Federalist-dominated Congress approved. However, several Republicans predicted the people would refuse to pay.[53]

As foreseen, the federal government struggled to collect the whiskey tax. Just as in the years leading up to the American Revolution, the people expressed hostility to a direct tax put in place by a faraway central government. Taxing distilled spirits meant the farmers farthest from the centers of commerce felt the burden most heavily. Perishable goods often did not survive the trip to market; however, when turned into alcohol, grain became portable. In cash-strapped areas of the country, people also used whiskey as a form of currency. Therefore, people in states south of New York began almost immediately to protest the excise tax. They tarred and feathered tax collectors, sent petitions to Congress requesting a repeal of the tax, and attacked fellow citizens who paid the tax.[54]

Federalists concluded that in order to preserve the union they must enforce the tax. Such public outbursts against legitimate laws passed by the central government would lead to anarchy. Hamilton decided to focus on four counties in western Pennsylvania. With Philadelphia the home of the central government, it looked bad that the government could not even collect the tax in the Pittsburgh area. Furthermore, government officials at least attempted to collect the tax in Pennsylvania. Anti-tax sentiment was so high the Washington administration could not find people to take jobs as tax collectors in most other states. In 1792, at Hamilton's urging, Washington issued a proclamation to condemn the efforts to resist the tax and to threaten strict enforcement. However, not until 1794 did the federal government attempt to back up the proclamation when the violence in Pennsylvania escalated.[55]

That summer, federal officials had attempted to enforce the whiskey tax. In response, approximately 500 members of the local militia units converged on the home of General John Neville, the excise inspector for the region. They demanded he resign his position and stop all efforts to collect the tax. Neville tried to defend his home, but the attackers set the house on fire and escaped into the countryside. Two weeks later, on August 1, about 6,000 militiamen gathered outside of Pittsburgh to continue their protest against the tax. Some wanted to attack Neville's headquarters, but cooler heads prevailed and the group dispersed. However, western Pennsylvanians continued to meet in smaller groups where they set up mock guillotines and talked about attacking the nearby federal arsenal. Rumors of secession and civil war circulated through the region.[56]

Whatever sympathy the president possessed for the people's concern about direct taxes evaporated when militia units gathered and threatened an attack on the federal government. Washington vowed to defend the union—quickly and decisively. He noted, "Neither the Military nor Civil government shall be trampled upon with impunity whilst I have the honor to be at the head of them."[57] Washington issued a proclamation on August 7 suggesting he would call out the militia to enforce the law. Since the governor and legislature of Pennsylvania had not asked for assistance, Washington sought a judicial writ giving him the power to use force if necessary. Hamilton wanted to deploy troops immediately; however, the president decided to send a peace commission to negotiate an end to the insurrection. When that effort failed, Washington called up 12,000 troops from New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Maryland, and Virginia. On September 25, the troops set out for Pittsburgh under Washington's command. By the time they arrived in October, the resistance movement had all but collapsed. The government arrested twenty men and took them to Philadelphia for trial. The president later pardoned the two convicted for treason, and the crisis ended.[58]

Nevertheless, the incident inflamed partisan passions. Federalists firmly believed they had saved the nation from disunion. They saw the rebellion as a test of the government's strength; in crushing it so decisively, they had won. Washington, for example, thought European monarchies would take seriously the idea that a republican form of government could successfully enforce the laws and simultaneously protect liberty and property. On the other hand, Republicans saw the show of force as a sign Federalists planned to create a standing army and thwart democracy. Jefferson, who had already left the administration, implied in his public statements that the Federalists had conjured a rebellion to boost their power.[59]

10.3.4 The Election of 1796

By 1796 the aging George Washington, having served two terms, wanted to retire to Mount Vernon, and no one could change his mind. Four years earlier, Washington had threatened to retire because of the ideological divisions in his cabinet and the growing political partisanship among the people. His closest advisers talked him out of what they considered a dangerous action. During a meeting with the president, James Madison sympathized with the great sacrifices Washington had made but also encouraged him to stay on. When Washington consulted Alexander Hamilton and Thomas Jefferson a short while later, they concurred. All three felt as Jefferson did when he wrote, "The confidence of the whole nation is centered in you."[60] And so, Washington agreed to stand for reelection, and the Electoral College voted for him unanimously.

However, the partisan rancor in his second term convinced the president he must retire. In part, Washington believed one way to quell the dissent was to set a precedent for the regular rotation of public officials. Republicans long accused Federalists of being monarchists. If he left office by choice, then he could mute such criticism. On September 19, 1796, George Washington announced his decision not to seek reelection to the American people. His "Farewell Address" appeared in newspapers across the country; he never delivered it as a spoken address. The address had three main themes: maintaining national unity, denouncing partisanship, and steering clear of permanent alliances with foreign countries.[61]

The address incorporated not only George Washington's ideas about maintaining national unity, but those of James Madison and Alexander Hamilton. The president revived a draft Madison began in 1792 before their ideological differences drove them apart. Washington, according to historian Joseph Ellis, included Madison's thoughts because he wanted to stress the importance of "subordinating sectional and ideological differences to larger national purposes." He also thought the effect would be all the more potent since Madison had become one of the leaders of the opposition party. The president then passed his notes on to Hamilton, who took out the self-pitying remarks about partisanship. The former secretary of treasury (he had left the administration in 1795) believed Washington's statement needed to "wear well." Over the course of several months, they ironed out the final statement that unmistakably indicated the president would not seek a third term.[62]

Washington's decision to retire set the stage for the first partisan president election in American history. No one had even bothered to challenge Washington in 1788 or 1792; he was, for many, the symbol of independence. In 1796, the people considered a long list of men with revolutionary qualifications, including Samuel Adams, Alexander Hamilton, Patrick Henry, and James Madison. However, John Adams and Thomas Jefferson emerged as the top choices. For much of their early political careers, the pair had worked together to secure independence. In the 1780s, they grew closer when Adams served as the minister to Great Britain and Jefferson served as the minister to France. They had grown apart in the 1790s as their ideological differences became more apparent. Adams dutifully supported the Federalist agenda, while Jefferson helped lead the opposition against a stronger central government. In the minds of the American people, Adams and Jefferson earned their fame as a pair, making the contest in 1796 even more heated. As Joseph Ellis remarks, "choosing between them seemed like choosing between the head and the heart of the American Revolution."[63]

At the Constitutional Convention in 1787, the framers had created the Electoral College to choose the president and vice president. Each state had the same number of electors as the number of people that served in United States Congress from that state. They could choose their electors in any way they saw fit. The electors could vote for any two candidates, as long as one of those candidates was not from their home state. The candidate with the highest number of votes became president; the candidate with the second highest number of votes became the vice president. If no candidate received a majority, then the House of Representatives, voting by state, would decide. Many of the framers anticipated most elections would end up in the House, and the Electoral College would serve more like a nominating body—determining the most qualified candidates for the presidency. As the political factions developed, political leaders began to speak more forcefully for a specific candidate, and the Electoral College never quite worked as envisioned in 1787.[64]

While both John Adams and Thomas Jefferson wanted to be president, as disinterested gentlemen leaders they could not publicly say so. In 1796, political aspirations made a candidate seem less qualified, not more, for public office. Therefore, both men retired to their homes and allowed their supporters to speak on their behalf. The Federalists supported John Adams and Thomas Pinckney; the Republicans supported Thomas Jefferson and Aaron Burr. Electors cast ballots for two individual men and not a ticket of president and vice president, so the lead up to the election was somewhat chaotic, especially since behind the scenes. Alexander Hamilton schemed to encourage Federalists to choose Pinckney over Adams. As the election approached, hostility toward Jay's Treaty seemed to give Jefferson the edge. However, economic conditions in the country suggested to some people that the Federalist agenda had achieved positive results.[65]

When the electors cast their ballots, John Adams took seventy-one votes to Jefferson's sixty-eight, Pinckney's fifty-nine, and Burr's thirty. The remaining votes went to a smattering of other candidates. The votes lined up on sectional lines more so than party lines. Most voters in the North preferred Adams, and most voters in the South preferred Jefferson. The results also meant a Federalist would serve as president, and a Republican would serve as vice president. Some observers thought that because Adams and Jefferson worked together so well before, they would mend their political differences and help end the factionalism that characterized the Washington years. Initially, both men seemed willing to bridge the gap between the parties. Adams thought Jefferson could play a greater role in his administration than he had played during Washington's administration. But hopes faded quickly, and the factionalism grew worse in the Adams years.

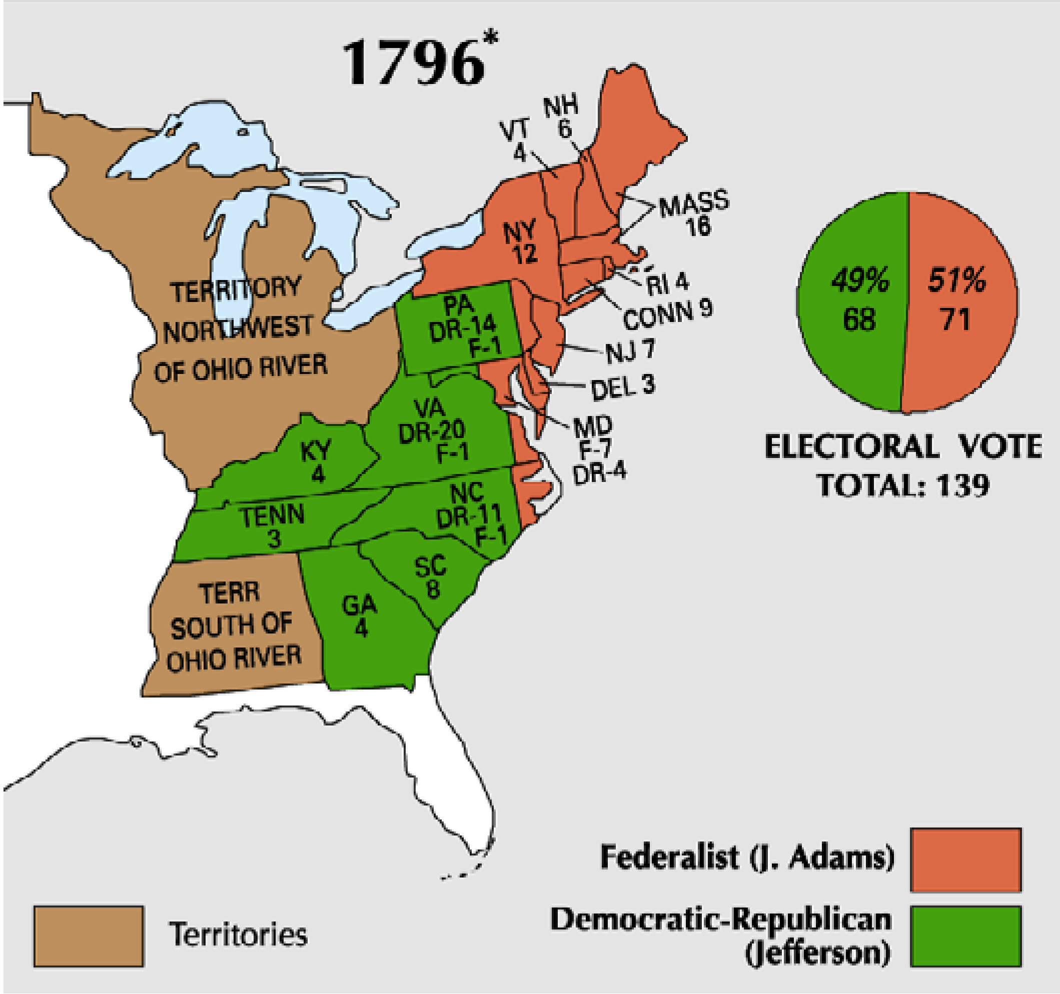
1796*
NH 6
VT 4
MASS 16
NY 12
RI 4
CONN 9
NJ 7
DEL 3
MD F-7 DR-4
PA DR-14 F-1
VA DR-20 F-1
KY 4
TENN 3
NC DR-11 F-1
SC 8
GA 4
TERRITORY NORTHWEST OF OHIO RIVER
TERR SOUTH OF OHIO RIVER
49% 68
51% 71
ELECTORAL VOTE TOTAL: 139
Federalist (J. Adams)
Democratic-Republican (Jefferson)
Territories

Figure 10.1 Presidential Election Map | 1796–George Washington's decision to retire set the stage for the first partisan president election in American history. Members of the Electoral College had to choose between John Adams, Aaron Burr, Thomas Jefferson, and Thomas Pinckney. The Federalist Adams triumphed, but the Republican Jefferson became the vice president.

Author: National Atlas of the United States
Source: Wikimedia Commons

10.3.5 Before You Move On...

Key Concepts

In the wake of the battle over ratification of the Constitution, most Americans accepted the new government it created. However, many still harbored suspicions about the possibility of the government abusing the considerable power placed in its hands. Therefore, a new debate arose over the Constitution's implementation, which led to the creation of the first party system. Federalists saw the federal government as a positive agent for change. If the nation's social and economic elite headed a strong central government, they believed all society would prosper. Republicans favored a less powerful central government and sought to place restrictions on its operation. They trusted the people to maintain a virtuous political system.

Inevitably, these two visions of the republic led to clashes between the leaders of both factions over the meaning of the French Revolution and the threat posed by the Whiskey Rebellion. As the Federalists looked at the farmers' revolt in western Pennsylvania, they saw the excesses of the French Revolution coming to the United States. Thus, the federal government needed to step in to eliminate such threats to order. However, the Republicans saw in Washington's decision to intervene in Pennsylvania the first signs of the federal government trampling on the people's liberty.

In 1796, the two parties vied to win the presidency in the nation's first partisan election. The two leading candidates—John Adams and Thomas Jefferson—both had the needed revolutionary credentials to run for president. Based on the provisions of the Electoral College, Federalist John Adams became president, and Republican Thomas Jefferson became vice president. Many people hoped the outcome would lessen political divisions, but during the Adams years tensions mounted as the two parties debated how to handle problems caused by the war between Great Britain and France.

Test Yourself

1. In foreign affairs, Americans became deeply divided in the 1790s over
   a. relations with Spain.
   b. the rise of Napoleon.
   c. the French Revolution.
   d. the banning of the international slave trade.

2. The Whiskey Rebellion in 1794 resulted in
    a. the repeal of the federal liquor tax.
    b. declining support for the Republicans.
    c. mass executions of the captured rebels.
    d. the sending of a massive army to western Pennsylvania.

3. In the election of 1796, the Federalist John Adams became president, and his vice president was
    a. the Republican Thomas Jefferson.
    b. the Federalist Charles C. Pinckney.
    c. the Federalist Alexander Hamilton.
    d. the Republican Aaron Burr.

Click here to see answers

10.4 THE ADAMS YEARS: FEDERALISTS UNDER FIRE

John Adams ascended to the presidency in 1797 with a great deal of public service experience. As a lawyer in Massachusetts, he became involved in the American Revolution. He pushed for independence at a time when other delegates to the Continental Congress wavered. In the 1780s, he was a diplomat in Holland, France, and Britain. Finally, he served as the vice president for eight years. While well-respected by his peers, he lacked Washington's prestige. Adams's obsession with adopting the appropriate ceremonial features for the new government earned him the nick name "his Rotundity" in the Washington years. Moreover, Adams had long supported the creation of a powerful chief executive. He felt conflict between the ordinary and the elite was inevitable, and only a strong president could effectively mediate disputes and preserve the rights of the people. His Republican critics associated his ideas with a desire to reinstate a monarchy in the United States, and members of his own party did not always trust his intentions. Thus, as he took the oath of office and gave his inaugural address, Adams sought to convey his republican simplicity, his desire for political unity, and his determination to avoid war with France or Britain.[66] Unfortunately, he realized none of his goals while in office. The growing crisis with France dominated his administration and, in turn, made partisan politics worse in the United States.

10.4.1 Adams, Jefferson, and Political Partisanship

With no precedent to follow, Adams opted to retain his predecessor's cabinet officers. Therefore, he had Timothy Pickering at the state department, Oliver Wolcott at the treasury department, and James McHenry at the war department. The new president thought the decision would lend greater prestige to his administration and help develop a civil service. Unfortunately, the holdovers proved problematic for two reasons. When Jefferson and Hamilton left government service, Washington found it difficult to find qualified appointees willing to serve given the bitter political climate. Therefore, his appointments possessed less political and administrative skill than needed for their positions. Moreover, all three owed their political careers to Alexander Hamilton. On political issues, they followed his lead publically even when it countered official administration policy. To some extent, Adams also experienced problems during his presidency because he prided himself on his independent action. Although he sought the advice of his secretaries, he often failed to inform them in advance of a pending decision, further driving them into Hamilton's camp.[67]

Beyond the challenges posed by retaining Washington's advisers, Adams had to deal with the fact that Thomas Jefferson, a member of the opposition party, became his vice president. After the election, Jefferson wrote to Adams, both to congratulate him and to suggest his willingness to serve the new president. The letter certainly convinced Abigail, Adams's wife, that the two men could work successfully together to lead the nation and develop bipartisan support for their policies. She encouraged her husband's belief that together they might just be able to fill Washington's shoes. To accomplish this, the president-elect looked to give Jefferson a greater role in his administration—possibly having him attend cabinet meetings and having him use his diplomatic skills. According to Joseph Ellis, Adams, unlike many of his contemporaries, seemed willing to negotiate political differences. For Adams, "intimacy trumped ideology."[68]

Jefferson learned about Adams's bipartisan plans through newspapers and conversations with his own supporters. The president-elect could not in the political climate of the day directly approach the vice president-elect to discuss the situation. Adams wrote letters and told his confidants his plans, knowing those plans would become public knowledge. Initially, as he learned of Adams's suggestions, Jefferson reacted somewhat favorably. However, his response changed when he heard the most controversial aspect of the plan: Adams planned to send a special minister to France to help avert war and hoped that either Jefferson or James Madison would head the delegation. Jefferson seemed more inclined to accept the offer than Madison, but Madison convinced him that accepting would be politically unwise.[69]

In the end, Jefferson chose leadership of the Republican Party over his friendship with Adams. The two men had dinner in early March with Washington at the presidential mansion in Philadelphia. Jefferson implied during conversations that neither he nor Madison wanted to play a role in developing the nation's policy toward France. Politically, Jefferson made a wise decision because the public never associated him with Adams's controversial foreign or domestic policies. Thus, Jefferson remained a viable alternative to Adams in the presidential election of 1800. Meanwhile, Adams faced an uphill battle in his administration from the start, because he had no one among his advisers whom he could really trust for advice. Adams often turned to Abigail, who was quite politically astute. However, her skills could not make up for the fact Adams came into the presidency with few people rooting for his success.[70]

10.4.2 The Quasi-War with France

Although Adams did not have Jefferson's support, the new president decided he must attempt to resolve the growing problem with France. When France declared war on Britain, the United States tried to maintain a neutral stance. From the French perspective, the Americans abandoned their neutrality with Jay's Treaty in 1795. However, the French took little action until after the presidential election in 1796. They had hoped Jefferson would prevail and reverse the pro-British stance of the Federalists. When Adams won, they turned from political subterfuge to direct confrontation. Just as the British had done before, the French began to seize American ships engaging in neutral trade.

Hoping to repair the relationship with France, Adams sent Charles Pinckney, John Marshall, and Elbridge Gerry to Paris. The envoy, per the president's instructions, sought to reiterate American friendship and request compensation for the attacks on American commercial vessels. Unfortunately, nothing went according to plan. French Foreign Minister Charles Maurice de Talleyrand-Périgord saw no reason to negotiate with the American delegates, as the United States posed no real threat to France. At the same time, the French government needed money to support its war against Britain. So, Talleyrand's agents—later labeled as X, Y, and Z—outlined the steps required for negotiations to begin: Adams needed to apologize for anti-French statements he made, the United States needed to pay its outstanding debts to France, and the United States needed to arrange for a loan, akin to a bribe, of 50,000 pounds for Talleyrand's private use. Since the Americans refused to pay the French, negotiations broke down.[71]

When Adams learned of the attempted bribe, later labeled as the XYZ Affair, in March 1798, he informed Congress that the diplomatic mission had failed. Moreover, he proposed arming American merchant ships. At that point, however, he refrained from telling Congress about the attempted bribe. The president felt he needed some time to devise a response. Without a doubt, Talleyrand's demands upset him. However, France's decisions to attack any American ship carrying British goods and close their ports to any American ship that docked in a British port concerned him more. The move would put Americans at risk as well as undermine American trade. Adams then sought the advice of his cabinet. Secretary of State Timothy Pickering and Attorney General Charles Lee favored a declaration of war. Pickering also suggested expanding the Anglo-American alliance. Secretary of Treasury Oliver Wolcott and Secretary of War James McHenry (taking his cues from Alexander Hamilton) felt the Americans should pursue a moderate course by engaging in limited hostilities and seeking a negotiated settlement. The president mulled over their ideas but eventually decided against an all-out war.[72]

After Adams announced the mission had failed, his Republican critics pounced. They said he had acted too rashly because he favored Britain. Thomas Jefferson, who had not seen the communications from the ministers in France, encouraged fellow Republicans in Congress to delay any war-like measures. Most of the opposition, including the vice president, believed the decision not to release the contents of the ministers' dispatches was some kind of cover up. During the debates on whether to arm merchant ships,

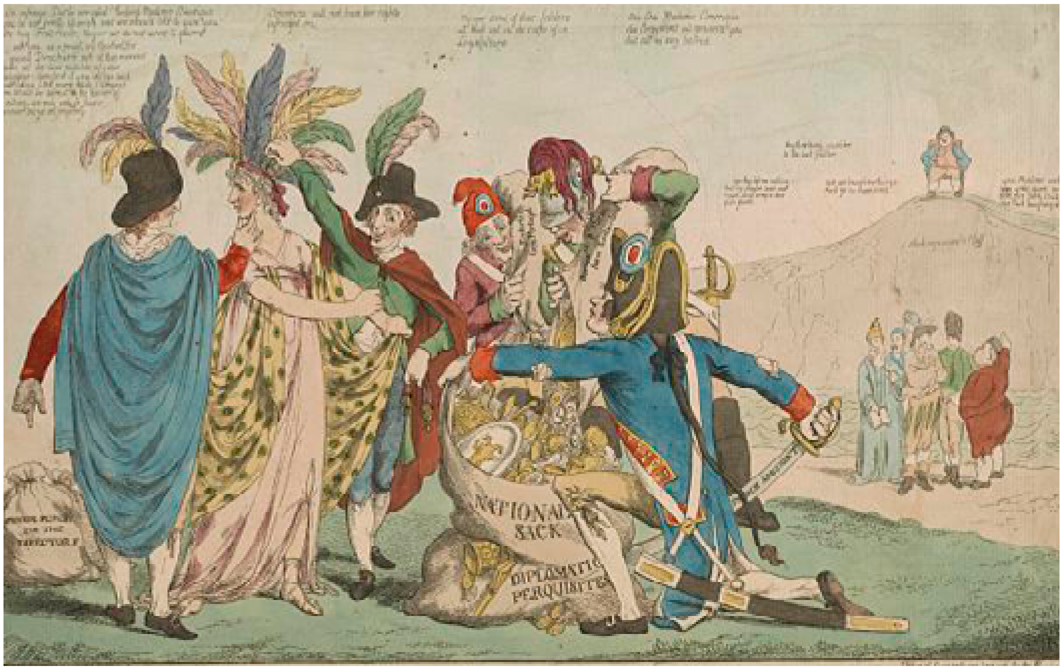

Figure 10.2 The XYZ Affair | This British political cartoon from 1798 depicts the French attempt to force the Americans to pay for the right to negotiate a treaty to ease tensions between the two nations.

Author: S.W. Fores
Source: Library of Congress

Republicans led the House of Representatives in passing a resolution to force Adams to share all the information he received from his ministers. The president complied in a restrained speech in April, much to the chagrin to the Republicans. The American people immediately expressed outrage over the XYZ Affair. War fever gripped the nation. Meanwhile, the Federalist Party, especially John Adams, became immediately popular with the public.[73]

Public outrage spurred Congressional support for Adams's policy of a limited, undeclared war with France—the so-called Quasi-War. In the following months, Congress approved by narrow margins measures for an embargo on all trade, increasing the size of the army and the navy, creating a Navy department, allowing naval vessels in the Atlantic to attack French ships in the act of seizing American vessels, and formally ending all previous treaties with France. Congress also approved a new tax measure, the Direct Tax, to pay for the military buildup. The government levied taxes on official documents (similar to the Stamp Act of 1765) and private residences. Few people questioned the need to support a more effective navy, since the undeclared war with France was a naval conflict. American ships like the USS *Constitution* and the USS *Constellation*, equipped with the latest naval technology, had some success in destroying French ships in the Caribbean.[74]

The decision to provide additional funds for a standing army was more divisive. Republicans loathed the idea of a standing army, fearing the government would use it to suppress opposition. Some Federalists, led by John Adams, preferred to put money into the navy. Adams saw the navy both as important in the conflict with France and for the future of American trade. High Federalists, led by Alexander Hamilton, preferred to put money into the army because it would help them curb any possible domestic rebellion. In spite of Adams's opposition, the more conservative High Federalists in Congress won support for enlarging the army. Largely because of the actions of the cabinet, Hamilton became the inspector general—making him the de facto commander of the U.S. Army. Many Republicans feared that Hamilton planned to use the newly raised 20,000 man army against them, especially since he only appointed loyal Federalists to the officer corps.[75]

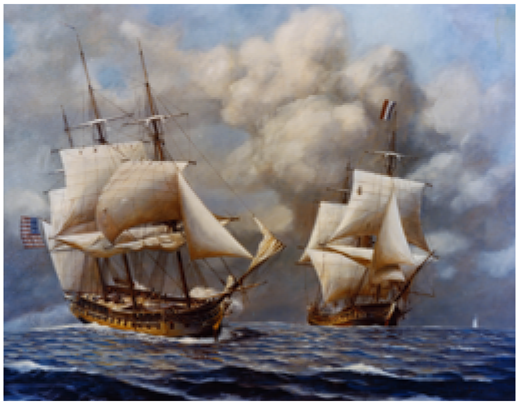

Figure 10.3 *Constellation* vs. French Frigate | This painting by Rear Admiral John William Schmidt (1906-1981) depicts the fighting between the USS Constellation (left) and French frigate L'Insurgente (right) on February 9, 1799 during the undeclared war with France.

Artist: John William Schmidt
Source: Naval History and Heritage Command

American naval victories in 1799, as well as Adams's fear of the High Federalists' plans, led him to send another diplomatic envoy to France. However, the cabinet encouraged fellow High Federalists in Congress to delay peace with France by preventing the diplomatic mission. In frustration, Adams retreated to his home in Massachusetts to await developments at home and abroad.[76] Before the end of the year, Napoleon Bonaparte came to power in France. His government indicated it would welcome the American ministers. With some Federalists still obstructing peace, Adams threatened to resign the presidency. Most accepted the decision to seek peace because they did not want Jefferson to become president. Adams then sent a new three-person delegation to Paris to negotiate a peace settlement.

In the Treaty of Mortefontaine, also known as the Convention of 1800, the Americans and the French pledged permanent friendship. They also cancelled their prior treaties relating to trade and mutual alliances. Furthermore, they agreed to uphold the principles of free trade. The Americans did not seek damages for the loss of ships or goods during the conflict. Adams sent the treaty and all the diplomatic communications relating to the treaty to the Senate in December. Republicans favored ratification, but High Federalists opposed an agreement with the French. The first time the Senate voted, the treaty did not pass. However, Adams tried again with a slightly modified treaty in February. This time, the Senate approved the treaty by a narrow margin, officially ending the hostilities with France.[77]

10.4.3 Domestic Turmoil

The XYZ Affair and the Quasi-War led to the increase of partisan politics in the United States. Pro-French sentiments remained high among some Republicans, and many doubted the French threat. Albert Gallatin, a leading Republican Congressman, went so far as to suggest Adams created the crisis to increase his power. Therefore, Republicans did not want to engage in a war against France, even a limited one. Throughout the debates on the war measures, Congressional Republicans attempted to block their passage. While unsuccessful, many still spoke publicly about their opposition. Federalists, meanwhile, did not just fear the French threat on the seas. They wondered what side the Republicans would support if France launched an attack on the United States. Federalists like Harrison Gray Otis believed France's victories in Europe came because they effectively deployed French spies to other countries. Federalists saw their political opponents as the first wave of French collaborators in the United States. Their fear led to the passage of the controversial Alien and Sedition Acts—four laws that targeted immigrants and the Republican press. Although the president signed each measure into law, he was never the driving force behind their creation or their enforcement. Abigail Adams and the High Federalists drove him to accept the measures.[78]

The Alien Act

The three laws targeting immigrants focused on those people who had yet to become naturalized citizens. Large numbers of people arrived in the United States during the 1790s. Federalists feared French immigrants would side with their home country, and Irish immigrants would side with France because they hated Great Britain. Once naturalized, moreover, the French and the Irish tended to vote Republican.[79] The Naturalization Act of 1798 extended the residency requirement for citizenship from five years to fourteen years. It also required all aliens to register upon arrival in the United States and prevented citizenship for aliens from countries at war with the United States. The Alien Enemies Act of 1798 allowed the president to deport or imprison an alien from an enemy country in times of war. The Alien Friends Act of 1798 allowed for the deportation of any alien in peacetime without a hearing if the president deemed that person a threat to the safety of the nation. The Adams administration never deported any aliens under these statutes for two reasons: many French voluntary left the country even before the measures passed, and the president adopted a strict interpretation of the statutes. Still, the immigration acts proved politically disadvantageous to the Federalists.[80]

Federalists designed the immigration acts to target people who might pose a threat to the country and who sided against them in elections. However, the laws also affected German immigrants living in southeastern Pennsylvania who tended to vote for the Federalists. Highly insular, the German population cared most about securing their land, selling their grain, and obtaining fair tax rates. For much of 1790s, Federalists took the German voters for granted. However, the naturalization law, coupled with tax increases to pay for the Quasi-War, harmed the Germans' pride and their finances. By the end of the decade, they grew tired of such treatment. Perhaps unintentionally, the federal government exacerbated tensions in the German community when they appointed mostly Moravians as tax assessors. Since the American Revolution, Germans in the United States had divided into two camps: "church" Germans (mostly Lutherans) and "sectarian" Germans (Moravians, Mennonites, and Quakers). The "church" Germans represented the majority of the German population. Republican leaders in Pennsylvania took advantage of the situation created by the federal government's hiring of the tax assessors; at the state level in 1798, their party scored several decisive victories in the southeastern counties.[81]

In early 1799, the Germans began to take up arms against the government. Although the Adams administration had attempted to assess the new taxes fairly, most Germans felt aggrieved by the increase. They held town meetings to discuss the tax laws, and they petitioned Congress to repeal them. But when armed bands of men began to intimidate the tax collectors, it prompted the local U.S. Marshals to arrest eighteen men for obstructing the law. On March 7, the marshals prepared to move the prisoners to Philadelphia for trial. The Bucks County militia, led by John Fries, surrounded the Sun Tavern in Bethlehem where the marshals held the prisoners. Fries demanded the prisoners be tried in Bucks County per the Sixth Amendment; he also demanded the marshals release the prisoners. Rather than challenge the over 140 armed men gathered outside the tavern, the chief marshal complied with Fries's request. The militia dispersed peacefully, but the chief marshal reported how an unruly mob seized the prisoners.[82]

In the wake of the events at the Sun Tavern, tensions cooled in southeastern Pennsylvania. The German population, including John Fries, publicly began to state they would comply with the tax laws. To the Federalist leaders in Philadelphia, however, Fries's Rebellion spoke directly to the threat posed by immigrants. As Adams prepared to leave for Massachusetts in March, his cabinet convinced him to issue a proclamation promising to suppress the treasonous actions with force. Adams agreed to the proclamation and left his secretaries to implement it. Federal troops set out for Bucks County and the surrounding area in April. The forces scoured the countryside for men, including Fries, who participated in the rebellion. Upon their arrest, the government transported the sixty prisoners to Philadelphia for trial on treason and other offenses. When the trials began, the Federalist judges showed no mercy on the defendants. Juries convicted Fries and two others of treason, and the judges sentenced them to death. Juries also convicted most of the remaining defendants of lesser crimes.[83]

As the date of the executions approached, Adams queried his cabinet on whether or not the events in Bucks County actually constituted treason. His advisers all argued the convicted men had engaged in an insurrection and so had committed a treasonous act. Adams, however, disagreed. He saw the action as a rebellion, not an insurrection. He decided to pardon not only Fries but all of the other defendants. As historian John Diggins suggests, "The president's pardon was an act of courage." Adams knew it would be unpopular with members of his own party. Politically, the response to Fries's Rebellion also hurt the Federalists because they lost the support of much of the German population.[84] The heavy-handed response, coupled with the immigration laws, became a political liability for Federalists, especially the president.

The Sedition Act

In the 1790s, the number of newspapers in the United States increased significantly, especially those that supported the Republican Party. For Republicans, newspapers provided a means to criticize the Federalists' undemocratic tendencies. For Federalists, they became a means for their opponents to promote the cause of the enemy.[85] Fearing the influence of the Republican press, Federalists in Congress supported the Sedition Act of 1798, which they set to expire on March 3, 1801. The act made it a crime "to impede the operation of any law of the United States" or to intimidate an official agent of the government from carrying out their duty. Violators of this article faced a prison term of up to five years and a fine of $5,000. The act also made it a crime to write, speak, or publish "any false, scandalous and malicious writing or writings against the government of the United States, or either house of the Congress of the United States, or the President." Violators of this article faced a prison term of up to two years and a fine of $2,000.[86]

Federalists, led by Thomas Pickering, actively pursued newspaper publishers who criticized Adams or the Fifth Congress. All told, the government arrested twenty-five people, brought charges of sedition against seventeen, and convicted ten including Matthew Lyon, a member of the House of Representatives. Lyon emigrated from Ireland in 1764 and became a successful businessman in Vermont. After years of trying, Lyon was elected to serve in the House in 1797. The following year, he became somewhat notorious after he spat on Roger Griswold of Connecticut when Griswold insulted his honor. A few days later Griswold and Lyon engaged in a tavern-like brawl on the House floor. Lyon also founded his own newspaper once he entered Congress because he could not find a publisher for his more radical ideas. Federalists, already wary of him after the confrontation with Griswold, decided to use the Sedition Act against Lyon. The government arrested him, brought him to trial, and convicted him in October 1798. He faced four months in prison and a $1,000 fine. The conviction did not end Lyon's political career, much to the Federalists' dismay. While in prison he continued to promote the Republican cause, successfully ran for reelection, and became a martyr for the cause of freedom.[87]

Most Republicans found the Sedition Act extremely offensive. The act limited free speech, which some Republicans thought violated the First Amendment. Furthermore, it did not protect the vice president from abuse. Lyon's conviction, as well as the convictions of other editors, convinced Republicans they needed to stand up against the Federalists' excesses. Thomas Jefferson and James Madison worked secretly through the Virginia and Kentucky legislatures to oppose the Alien and Sedition Acts. Jefferson wrote a series of resolutions, which he passed along to John Breckinridge to introduce in Kentucky. The vice president argued the states had the final authority to determine if acts of the federal government exceeded the limits of the Constitution. When states deemed a federal statute as excessive, they could declare it to have “no force” in their state. In other words, they could nullify federal laws. Madison drafted slightly milder resolutions of protest, which he gave to John Taylor to introduce in Virginia.[88]

Kentucky passed the resolutions in November, and Virginia followed suit in December. Each legislature also encouraged the other states to join them in questioning the constitutionality of the Alien and Sedition Acts. None of the other state legislatures supported the measures, and several northern legislatures rejected them outright and suggested the judicial branch, not the states, should determine the constitutionality of federal laws. The Virginia and Kentucky Resolutions of 1798 did not at the time alter the prevailing notions about the relationship between the federal government and the states. They did provide a piece of political propaganda for Republicans to use as the nation drew closer to the next presidential election. In the future, states’ rights activists would point back to the resolves when the debated the merits of nullification and secession.[89]

10.4.4 The Election of 1800

John Adams recognized his chances for reelection in 1800 were not good. By pursuing a moderate course, he had managed to alienate both Federalists and Republicans. His own party disliked his decision to settle with France and to pardon those involved in Fries’s Rebellion. The opposition party disliked the emergence of a standing army and the passage of the Alien and Sedition Acts. Alexander Hamilton led the opposition to the president among the Federalists, even after the party endorsed Adams and Charles Pinckney. Hamilton suggested in a report leaked to the press that Adams did not have a talent for administration. Furthermore, he said “there are great defects to his character, which unfit him for the office of chief magistrate.”[90]

The Republicans delighted at how the Federalists turned on one another because it made their favored candidate, Thomas Jefferson, appear as the only sensible choice. Of course, the Republicans did not remain free of controversy. They paired Jefferson with Aaron Burr—a talented New York politician who possessed a reputation for self-promotion—in hopes of picking up votes in Burr’s home state. Republicans thought they had a good chance to win the presidency given the Federalists’ antics. However, no one expected the counting of the Electoral College to play out quite like it did. Adams and Pinckney, as expected, did well in New England. Jefferson and Burr, not surprisingly, did well in the South. But in the end, the election turned on the votes of New York and Pennsylvania, which both went to the Republicans. Jefferson and Burr each took seventy-three votes, Adams took sixty-five, and Pinckney took sixty-four. The Federalists lost the election, but because the Republican candidates took the same number of votes, the House of Representatives would determine the victor.[91]

To win, Jefferson or Burr needed the support of nine of the sixteen states within the House of Representatives. The Federalists controlled six delegations, while the Republicans controlled eight. Vermont and Maryland's delegations split between the two parties. In essence, Federalists in Congress would have the final say on whether Jefferson or Burr would become president. Some Federalists so disliked and distrusted Jefferson that they considered throwing the election to Burr. He seemed

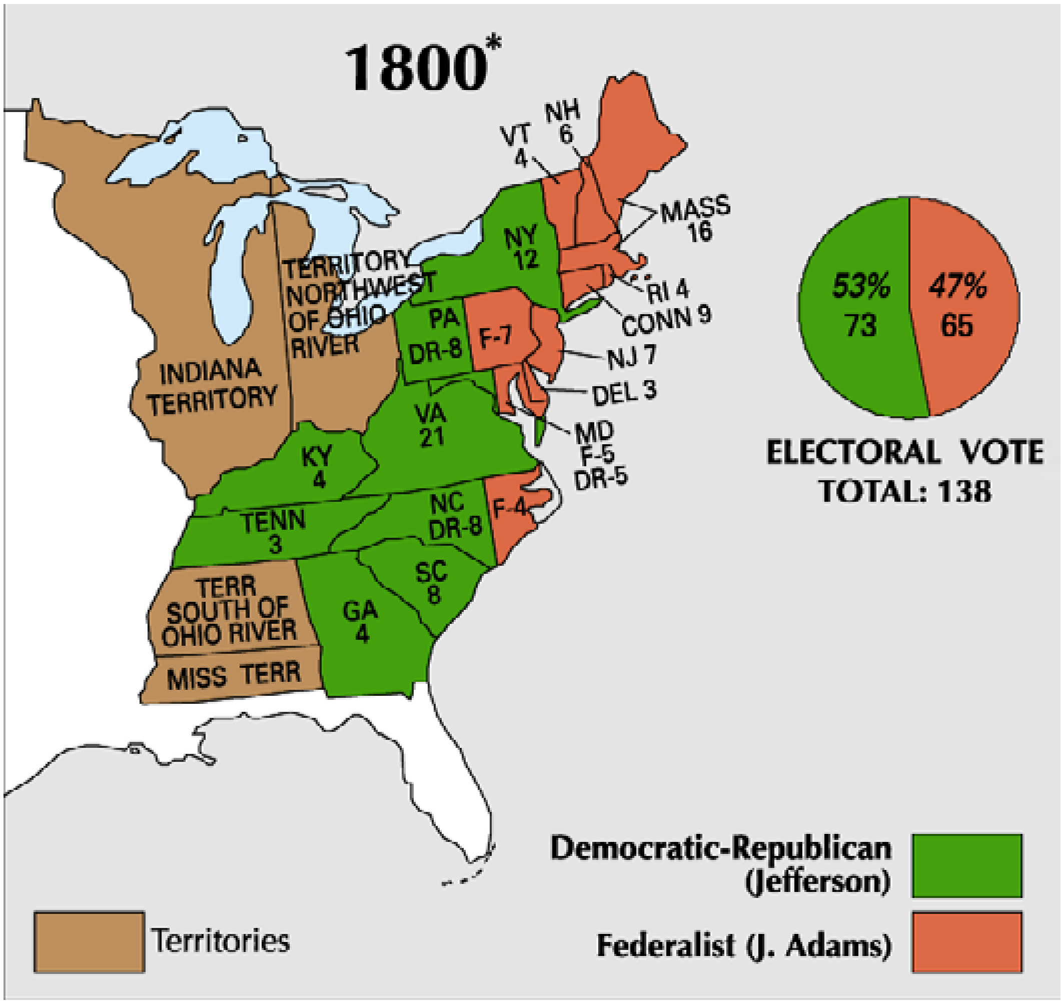
1800*
NH 6
VT 4
MASS 16
NY 12
RI 4
CONN 9
TERRITORY NORTHWEST OF OHIO RIVER
PA DR-8
F-7
NJ 7
DEL 3
INDIANA TERRITORY
VA 21
MD F-5 DR-5
KY 4
TENN 3
NC DR-8
F-4
SC 8
GA 4
TERR SOUTH OF OHIO RIVER
MISS TERR
53% 73
47% 65
ELECTORAL VOTE TOTAL: 138
Democratic-Republican (Jefferson)
Federalist (J. Adams)
Territories

Figure 10.4 Presidential Election Map, 1800 | Thomas Jefferson challenged incumbent John Adams for the presidency in 1800. Jefferson defeated Adams, but he tied with fellow Republican Aaron Burr in the Electoral College voting. The House of Representatives decided in favor of Jefferson after his longtime opponent Alexander Hamilton swayed some Federalist votes against Burr. Many people have referred to the election as the "Revolution of 1800" because of the peaceful transfer of power from one political party to another.

Author: National Atlas of the United States
Source: Wikimedia Commons

the safer choice because for much of his political career he had promoted himself, not a political philosophy. Burr seemed less likely to dismantle the Federalists' economic program. Once again, Alexander Hamilton stepped in to sway his fellow party members. Hamilton never trusted Burr; therefore, he encouraged the Federalists in the House to vote for Jefferson. Burr, meanwhile, knew the Republicans had intended for Jefferson to become president, but he would not step aside or defer to Jefferson.[92]

The House voted thirty-five times in early February but neither candidate received a majority. Fears that Republicans might call for a new constitutional convention, coupled with increasing threats of mob violence, pushed Federalists to turn toward Jefferson. On February 17, 1801, Jefferson received a majority of votes when several delegates abstained from voting. Republican newspapers celebrated Jefferson's victory as well as the party's victories in numerous congressional elections. Many suggested the election had revolutionary undertones because it marked the first time in modern history when a popular election led to a peaceful transfer of power. Jefferson echoed those sentiments in an 1819 letter, suggesting his victory "was as real a revolution in the principles of our government as that of 76" because it was achieved by a "rational and peaceable instrument of reform." Moreover, it marked the dismissing of one political philosophy in favor of another.[93]

John Adams was hardly surprised by the election's outcome. During his final months in office, he did work to promote one more initiative. In 1799, he had encouraged Federalists in the Senate to expand the federal judiciary; however, few paid attention to his request. When Adams lost the election, Federalists in the outgoing or lame-duck Congress began to feel differently about the future of the judicial branch. If they created more positions, the president could fill those positions with loyal Federalists before he left office. Those judges could thus help preserve the Federalist agenda when Jefferson took over. In February, only days before the House chose Jefferson, Congress passed the Judiciary Act of 1801. It created twenty-three new district and circuit court positions eliminating the need for Supreme Court justices to hear district court cases. The president signed the measure and began to make appointments for the Senate to approve before their session ended. By the time he left office, Adams had made recommendations to fill all of the new positions. However, the most notable of the so-called midnight appointments went to John Marshall, who became the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court.[94]

On March 4, 1801, John Adams left Washington, D.C., where the federal government had moved the previous year, without attending his successor's inauguration. Adams felt let down by his own party, abused by the opposition party, and most definitely not appreciated for the contributions he had made to the nation throughout his public career. His departure, for all practical purposes, spelled the end of the Federalists as a national party. While they retained a presence in the Northeast until 1815, they attracted few new voters to their cause. For much of their history, the Federalists had run against the tide of democracy, and their actions in the Adams years further underscored that fact. However, their program of economic development lived on as future nationally-minded leaders proposed protective tariffs, a national bank, and support for internal improvements, among others.

10.4.5 Before You Move On...

Key Concepts

During his presidency, John Adams struggled to manage the growing crisis with France and handle the domestic divisions stemming from his foreign policy. Adams initially sought to negotiate a treaty with France to protect American shipping from attacks. Unfortunately, the attempt led only to the XYZ Affair in which the French attempted to bribe the American negotiators in Paris. After Adams disclosed the duplicity, the majority of the American people appeared to want to defend American honor, leading to the Quasi-War.

Republicans vocally opposed the conflict with France and even suggested Adams created the conflict to increase his power. Angered by the accusations against the president, Federalists responded with the controversial Alien and Sedition Acts in 1798, which curbed the rights of immigrants and the freedom of speech. Frustrated Republicans felt they needed to respond to the Federalist threat. As a result, Thomas Jefferson and James Madison secretly made an impassioned plea for states' rights with the Virginia and Kentucky Resolutions of 1798, arguing that states should determine the constitutionality of federal laws. While the resolutions did little to change the relationship between the federal government and the state governments, they did serve as an important piece of propaganda for the Republicans as the election of 1800 approached. Thomas Jefferson defeated John Adams, bringing the Federalist Era to an end.

Test Yourself

1. The Federalists designed the Sedition Act of 1798 primarily to

   a. safeguard civil liberties.

   b. smother political opposition.

   c. ensure public safety.

   d. encourage the flow of European immigrants.

2. The Virginia and Kentucky Resolutions asserted that
   - a. the Republicans had betrayed the spirit of the Constitution.
   - b. the federal government had the right to void state laws.
   - c. the Supreme Court had no constitutional authority to invalidate federal laws.
   - d. states had the right to nullify federal laws.

3. The election of 1800 did all of the following except
   - a. mark the first time an opposition party came to power.
   - b. cause Federalist rioting in the streets of the capital.
   - c. show the emergence of a more democratic politics.
   - d. elevate Jefferson to the presidency.

4. Federalists passed the Judiciary Act of 1801 in order to
   - a. deny Republicans full control of the government.
   - b. replace the principles of English common law.
   - c. establish the doctrine of judicial review.
   - d. reduce the number of federal courts and judges.

Click here to see answers

10.5 Conclusion

During the Federalist Era, the American people and their leaders sought to define the character of their nation. The country transitioned from a loose confederation of states to a stronger coalition under the new national government. Nevertheless, many facets of the relationship between the people, the states, and the federal government still needed to be determined. Two political parties—the Federalists and the Republicans—emerged to debate the implementation of the Constitution. Federalists supported a strong central government, whereas Republicans favored a more limited central government. The 1790s became quite contentious because political leaders found it difficult to accept differences of opinion. Regardless of their party, they believed the nation was engaged in a life-and-death struggle for its future.

George Washington tried to implement Alexander Hamilton's ideas for strengthening the nation at home and abroad in order to build respect for the new country. Questions about supporting economic development and developing a pro-French or pro-British foreign policy emerged during his tenure. Washington's response to the Whiskey Rebellion suggested he most definitely leaned towards the Federalist outlook; it also increased opposition to his policies. By 1796, political divisions created a tense atmosphere as the nation sought to select a new president. In the nation's first partisan election, Federalist John Adams defeated Republican Thomas Jefferson, but Jefferson became the vice president because Electoral College voters did not vote by party simply for two candidates.

Political divisions continued to afflict the nation when John Adams took over. The United States became involved in the Quasi-War after the XYZ Affair exposed the nefarious nature of the French government. Republicans disliked the war, but they opposed the Alien and Sedition Acts (an effort by the Federalists to curb the Republicans' power) even more. In 1800, Thomas Jefferson won the presidency for the Republican Party. Many Americans believed the nation experienced a second revolution of sorts because power had transferred peacefully from one political party to another.

As the United States entered a new century, the true revolutionary character of Jefferson's election remained unclear. Washington and Adams had done much in their presidencies to shape the character of the presidency and of the nation. When Jefferson took office, people wondered how much their relationship to the central government really would change. Would Jefferson truly abandon a strong national government and defer to the states, or would his changes be more cosmetic than substantial? Republicans anticipated future changes, while Federalists dreaded them.

10.6 CRITICAL THINKING EXERCISES

- Throughout American history, international developments have affected domestic public policy. How did they alter the nation's course in the Federalist Era? How might the experiences of George Washington and John Adams compare to the presidents of the twenty-first century?
- Political parties in the United States have constantly evolved. How do Federalists and Republicans in the first party system compare to the Democrats and Republicans today? What similarities and differences do you see between these parties in terms of political philosophy and important public policy issues?
- The popular press played an active role in the political debates of the 1790s. What did the newspapers provide to national leaders, and why did they become so important? How do the papers of 1790s compare to modern social media? Do they play the same role?

10.7 KEY TERMS

- Alien and Sedition Acts of 1798
- Bill of Rights
- Aaron Burr
- Citizen Genet
- Compromise of 1790
- Democratic-Republican Clubs
- Farewell Address
- Federalists (Federalist Party)
- French Revolution
- Fries's Rebellion
- *Gazette of the United States*
- Alexander Hamilton
- Indian Intercourse Acts
- Jay's Treaty
- Thomas Jefferson
- Judiciary Act of 1801
- Little Turtle
- James Madison
- John Marshall
- Midnight Appointments
- *National Gazette*
- Northwest Indian War
- Thomas Pickering
- Charles Pinckney
- Pinckney's Treaty
- Quasi-War with France
- Report on Public Credit
- Report on the Bank
- Report on Manufactures
- Republicans (Republican Party)
- Revolution of 1800
- Treaty of Greenville
- Treaty of Mortefontaine
- Virginia and Kentucky Resolutions of 1798
- George Washington
- Anthony Wayne
- Whiskey Rebellion
- XYZ Affair

10.8 CHRONOLOGY

The following chronology is a list of important dates and events associated with this chapter.

Date	Event
1788	Electoral College chose George Washington as the first president
1789	French Revolution began; James Madison drafted the Bill of Rights; Congress approved ten amendments to the Constitution; Congress passed the Judiciary Act of 1789; John Fenno began publishing the Gazette of the United States to support the Washington administration's policies
1790	Alexander Hamilton sent the Public Report on Credit and the Report on the Bank to Congress; Hamilton and Madison agreed to the Compromise of 1790; Congress approved the Assumption Bill and the Residence Bill; Congressed passed an excise tax on distilled spirits (the whiskey tax)
1791	Congress chartered the First National Bank of the United States; Philip Freneau began publishing the National Gazette to oppose the Washington administration's policies; Hamilton sent the Report on Manufacturers to Congress
1792	Washington issued a proclamation supporting the enforcement of the whiskey tax
1793	Reign of Terror began in France; France declared war on Great Britain; Washington issued the Neutrality Proclamation; First Democratic-Republican clubs began to meet; Citizen Edmond Charles Genet arrived in the United States as the new ambassador from France
1794	French government recalled Genet because of American complaints; Battle of Fallen Timbers occurred in the Ohio Valley; Whiskey Rebellion occurred in western Pennsylvania; Washington led the militia forces to put down the attack on the government
1795	The United States concluded the Treaty of Greenville with various tribes in the Northwest; The United States concluded Jay's Treaty (Treaty of Amity, Commerce and Navigation) with Great Britain

Date	Event
1796	The United States concluded Pinckney's Treaty (Treaty of San Lorenzo) with Spain; Washington decided not to seek a third term and issued his Farewell Address; John Adams defeated Thomas Jefferson in the presidential election
1798	XYZ Affair prompted an undeclared war with France (the Quasi-War); Congress passed the Alien and Sedition Acts; Virginia and Kentucky Resolutions passed by the respective state legislatures to oppose the Alien and Sedition Acts
1799	Fries's Rebellion (a tax revolt) occurred in western Pennsylvania
1800	The United States concluded the Treaty of Mortefontaine (Convention of 1800) with France to end the Quasi-War; Thomas Jefferson defeated John Adams in the presidential election

10.9 BIBLIOGRAPHY

Appleby, Joyce. *Capitalism and the New Social Order: The Republican Vision of the 1790s*. New York: New York University Press, 1984.

Brown, Ralph Adams. *The Presidency of John Adams*. Lawrence: University of Kansas Press, 1975.

Burns, James McGregor and Susan Dunn. *George Washington*. New York: Times Books, 2004.

Diggins, John Patrick. *John Adams*. New York: Times Books, 2003.

Elkins, Stanley and Eric McKitrick. *The Age of Federalism*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1993.

Ellis, Joseph J. *Founding Brothers: The Revolutionary Generation*. New York: Vintage Books, 2002.

McDonald, Forrest. *The Presidency of George Washington*. Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1974.

Miller, John C. *The Federalist Era*. New York: Harper & Row, 1960.

Outline of U.S. History. Washington: U.S. Department of State, 2005, 2010.

Staloff, Darren. *Hamilton, Adams, Jefferson: The Politics of Enlightenment and the American Founding*. New York: Hill and Wang, 2005.

Sturgis, Amy H., ed. *Presidents from Washington through Monroe, 1789-1825: Debating the Issues in Pro and Con Primary Documents*. Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 2002.

Wood, Gordon S. *Empire of Liberty: A History of the Early Republic, 1789-1815*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2009.

Wood, Gordon S. *The Radicalism of the American Revolution*. New York: Vintage Books, 1993.

10.10 END NOTES

1 James McGregor Burns and Susan Dunn, *George Washington* (New York: Times Books, 2004), 48.

2 Burns and Dunn, *George Washington*, 48; Gordon S. Wood, *Empire of Liberty: A History of the Early Republic, 1789-1815* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2009), 51-58.

3 John Adams to Jabez Brown, 26 June 1789 in *Presidents from Washington through Monroe, 1789-1825: Debating the Issues in Pro and Con Primary Documents*, ed. Amy H. Sturgis (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 2002), 22.

4 Wood, *Empire of Liberty*, 83-85.

5 Wood, *Empire of Liberty*, 53-54, 84-85; Burns and Dunn, *George Washington*, 56-57.

6 Stanley Elkins and Eric McKitrick, *The Age of Federalism* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993), 59-60.

7 Elkins and McKitrick, *The Age of Federalism*, 61-62; Wood, *Empire of Liberty*, 67-69.

8 Burns and Dunn, *George Washington*, 44, 52, 58.

9 Woods, *Empire of Liberty*, 78.

10 Burns and Dunn, *George Washington*, 53-55.

11 George Washington to John Armstrong, 25 April 1788, *The Papers of George Washington*, University of Virginia, April 19, 2012, http://gwpapers.virginia.edu/documents/constitution/1788/armstrong.html.

12 George Washington to James McHenry, 13 July 1796, *The Writings of George Washington*, Volume XI, ed. Jared Sparks (New York: Harper & Brothers Publishers, 1848), 147-148.

13 Wood, *Empire of Liberty*, 86-89.

14 Wood, *Empire of Liberty*, 95-97; Elkins and McKitrick, *The Age of Federalism*, 116-117.

15 Elkins and McKitrick, *The Age of Federalism*, 116; Wood, *Empire of Liberty*, 103-104; Burns and Dunn, *George Washington*, 79.

16 Wood, *Empire of Liberty*, 141; Joseph J. Ellis, *Founding Brothers: The Revolutionary Generation* (New York: Vintage Books, 2002), 56-57.

17 Wood, *Empire of Liberty*, 141, 148-149; Ellis, *Founding Brothers*, 58.

18 Wood, *Empire of Liberty*, 142; Ellis, *Founding Brothers*, 48-49.

19 Ellis, *Founding Brothers*, 50-52, 78-80.

20 Wood, *Empire of Liberty*, 149.

21 Darren Staloff, *Hamilton, Adams, Jefferson: The Politics of Enlightenment and the American Founding* (New York: Hill and Wang, 2005), 79-80.

22 Wood, *Empire of Liberty*, 98-99, 144-145; Staloff, *Hamilton, Adams, Jefferson*, 97-98.

23 Elkins and McKitrick, *The Age of Federalism*, 229-230; James Madison, “Speech on the Bank Bill.” 2 February 1791 in *Liberty and Order: The First American Party Struggle* ed. Lance Banning (Indianapolis: Liberty Fund, 2004), The Online Library of Liberty, April 19, 2012, http://oll.libertyfund.org/title/875/63865.

24 Fisher Ames, *Annals of Congress*, I Cong., 3 Sess. quoted in Elkins and McKitrick, *The Age of Federalism*, 230-231.

25 Wood, *Empire of Liberty*, 144-145; Burns and Dunn, *George Washington*, 81-82.

26 Wood, *Empire of Liberty*, 101-102.

27 Burns and Dunn, *George Washington*, 83-84.

28 Elkins and McKitrick, *The Age of Federalism*, 276-277.

29 Burns and Dunn, *George Washington*, 98.

30 Wood, *Empire of Liberty*, 88-89, 198-199.

31 Northwest Ordinance (1787), The National Archives and Records Administration, January 30, 2012, http://www.ourdocuments.gov/doc.php?flash=true&doc=8.

32 *Johnson v. M’Intosh,* 21 U.S. 543 (1823).

33 Wood, *Empire of Liberty*, 112-113.

34 Elkins and McKitrick, *The Age of Federalism*, 392, 397.

35 Wood, *Empire of Liberty*, 197-198.

36 Burns and Dunn, *George Washington*, 104; Wood, *Empire of Liberty*, 131.

37 Wood, *Empire of Liberty*, 150-151.

38 Wood, *Empire of Liberty*, 162-163.

39 Wood, *Empire of Liberty*, 104; Burns and Dunn*, George Washington*, 90.

40 Wood, *Empire of Liberty*, 161; Burns and Dunn*, George Washington*, 90; *Outline of U.S. History* (Washington: U.S. Department of State, 2005, 2010), 79, January 11, 2012, http://www.america.gov/publications/books/history-outline.html.

41 Wood, *Empire of Liberty*, 164-173, 251-252.

42 John Marshall, *The Life of George Washington*, Volume 5 (Philadelphia: C.P. Wayne, 1807) quoted in Elkins and McKitrick, *The Age of Federalism*, 310.

43 Wood, *Empire of Liberty*, 177-178.

44 Burns and Dunn, *George Washington*, 105.

45 Wood, *Empire of Liberty*, 182-183.

46 George Washington, “A Proclamation,” April 22, 1793, *The Avalon Project*, Yale Law School, January 9, 2012, http://avalon.law.yale.edu/18th_century/neutra93.asp.

47 Wood, *Empire of Liberty*, 183.

48 Wood, *Empire of Liberty*, 184-185.

49 Elkins and McKitrick, *The Age of Federalism*, 340-341.

50 Wood, *Empire of Liberty*, 186-187; Elkins and McKitrick, *The Age of Federalism*, 350.

51 Elkins and McKitrick, *The Age of Federalism*, 351-352.

52 Wood, *Empire of Liberty*, 187-188.

53 Wood, *Empire of Liberty*, 134-135.

54 Wood, *Empire of Liberty*, 136.

55 Elkins and McKitrick, *The Age of Federalism*, 462.

56 Elkins and McKitrick, *The Age of Federalism*, 463; Wood, *Empire of Liberty*, 137.

57 George Washington, *Writings*, Volume 32, ed. John Clement Fitzpatrick (Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1931-1944), George Washington Resources, University of Virginia, April 19, 2012, http://etext.virginia.edu/washington/fitzpatrick/.

58 Elkins and McKitrick, *The Age of Federalism*, 463; Wood, *Empire of Liberty*, 137-138.

59 Wood, *Empire of Liberty*, 138-139; Ellis, *Founding Brothers*, 140-141.

60 Thomas Jefferson, *Writings*, Volume 6, ed. Paul Leicester Ford (New York: G.P. Putnam’s Sons, 1892-1899) quoted in Burns and Dunn, *George Washington*, 94.

61 Ellis, *Founding Brothers*, 121, 128-129; Burns and Dunn, *George Washington*, 129.

62 Ellis, *Founding Brothers*, 149-151.

63 Ellis, *Founding Brothers*, 163-164.

64 Wood, *Empire of Liberty*, 210.

65 Wood, *Empire of Liberty*, 200, 211.

66 John Patrick Diggins, *John Adams* (New York: Times Books, 2003), 89; Wood, *Empire of Liberty*, 215.

67 Diggins, *John Adams*, 91-92.

68 Ellis, *Founding Brothers*, 179-180.

69 Ellis, *Founding Brothers*, 182-183.

70 Ellis, *Founding Brothers*, 184-185.

71 Diggins, *John Adams*, 96-97; Wood, *Empire of Liberty*, 241-242.

72 Elkins and McKitrick, *The Age of Federalism*, 582-583, 586.

73 Elkins and McKitrick, *The Age of Federalism*, 587-588; Wood, *Empire of Liberty*, 243-244.

74 Wood, *Empire of Liberty*, 245; Diggins, *John Adams*, 106, 130, 141.

75 Diggins, *John Adams*, 107-108.

76 Diggins, *John Adams*, 144-145.

77 Diggins, *John Adams*, 147; Ralph Adams Brown, *The Presidency of John Adams* (Lawrence: University of Kansas Press, 1975), 173-174.

78 Wood, *Empire of Liberty*, 246-247.

79 Elkins and McKitrick, *The Age of Federalism*, 694-695.

80 Diggins, *John Adams*, 111-113; Wood, *Empire of Liberty*, 249-250, 260.

81 Elkins and McKitrick, *The Age of Federalism*, 695-696.

82 Elkins and McKitrick, *The Age of Federalism*, 697; Diggins, *John Adams*, 131-132.

83 Elkins and McKitrick, *The Age of Federalism*, 697-698.

84 Diggins, *John Adams*, 136-137.

85 Wood, *Empire of Liberty*, 251, 256-257.

86 “An Act for the Punishment of Certain Crimes Against the United States [The Sedition Act],” July 17, 1798, General Records of the United States Government, Record Group 11, National Archives, January 27, 2012, http://www.ourdocuments.gov/doc.php?doc=16&page=transcript.

87 Wood, *Empire of Liberty*, 227-229, 262; Elkins and McKitrick, *The Age of Federalism*, 710-711.

88 Elkins and McKitrick, *The Age of Federalism*, 719.

89 Elkins and McKitrick, *The Age of Federalism*, 720-721.

90 Alexander Hamilton, *The Public Conduct of John Adams, Esq., The President of the United States* (New York: E.G. House, 1809), The New York Public Library Internet Archive, April 19, 2012, http://archive.org/details/letterfromalexan00hami2.

91 Diggins, *John Adams*, 148-149.

92 Wood, *Empire of Liberty*, 283-284; Ellis, *Founding Brothers*, 43.

93 Wood, *Empire of Liberty*, 285-286; Thomas Jefferson to Spencer Roane, 6 September 1819. Thomas Jefferson Papers, Library of Congress Manuscript Division, Washington, DC, January 27, 2012 http://www.loc.gov/exhibits/jefferson/137.html.

94 Brown, *The Presidency of John Adams*, 199-200.

ANSWER KEY FOR CHAPTER TEN: THE FEDERALIST ERA

Check your answers to the questions in the Before You Move On Sections for this chapter. You can click on the questions to take you back to the chapter section.

Correct answers are **BOLDED**

Section 10.2.4 - p448

1. The Bill of Rights did all of the following except
    a. constitute the first ten amendments to the Constitution.
    b. appease some initial critics of the Constitution.
    c. safeguard freedoms such as press, speech, and assembly.
    D. SETTLE ALL QUESTIONS ABOUT FEDERAL VERSUS STATE AUTHORITY.

2. Madison and Jefferson objected to the national bank in the 1790s primarily because
    A. THEY BELIEVED IN STRICT CONSTRUCTION WHEN INTERPRETING THE CONSTITUTION.
    b. they felt it was not powerful enough to meet the nation’s financial needs.
    c. it would cost the government too much money.
    d. it would be located in New York rather than Virginia.

3. The Treaty of Greenville was an agreement between the United States and
    a. Great Britain.
    B. INDIANS ON THE NORTHWEST FRONTIER.
    c. Spain.
    d. Canada.

4. Jay’s Treaty, ratified by the Senate in 1795,
    a. guaranteed the right of Americans to trade in the West Indies.
    b. forced Hamilton’s resignation from the cabinet.
    C. INFURIATED AMERICAN PEOPLE FOR ITS CONCESSIONS TO THE BRITISH.
    d. was most strongly opposed in New England.

Section 10.3.5 - p459

1. In foreign affairs, Americans became deeply divided in the 1790s over
    a. relations with Spain.
    b. the rise of Napoleon.
    C. THE FRENCH REVOLUTION.
    d. the banning of the international slave trade.

2. The Whiskey Rebellion in 1794 resulted in
    a. the repeal of the federal liquor tax.
    b. declining support for the Republicans.
    c. mass executions of the captured rebels.
    D. THE SENDING OF A MASSIVE ARMY TO WESTERN PENNSYLVANIA.

3. In the election of 1796, the Federalist John Adams became president, and his vice president was
    A. THE REPUBLICAN THOMAS JEFFERSON.
    b. the Federalist Charles C. Pinckney.
    c. the Federalist Alexander Hamilton.
    d. the Republican Aaron Burr.

Section 10.4.5 - p472

1. The Federalists designed the Sedition Act of 1798 primarily to
    - a. safeguard civil liberties.
    - **B. SMOTHER POLITICAL OPPOSITION.**
    - c. ensure public safety.
    - d. encourage the flow of European immigrants.

2. The Virginia and Kentucky Resolutions asserted that
    - a. the Republicans had betrayed the spirit of the Constitution.
    - b. the federal government had the right to void state laws.
    - c. the Supreme Court had no constitutional authority to invalidate federal laws.
    - **D. STATES HAD THE RIGHT TO NULLIFY FEDERAL LAWS.**

3. The election of 1800 did all of the following except
    - a. mark the first time an opposition party came to power.
    - **B. CAUSE FEDERALIST RIOTING IN THE STREETS OF THE CAPITAL**.
    - c. show the emergence of a more democratic politics.
    - d. elevate Jefferson to the presidency.

4. Federalists passed the Judiciary Act of 1801 in order to
    - **A. DENY REPUBLICANS FULL CONTROL OF THE GOVERNMENT.**
    - b. replace the principles of English common law.
    - c. establish the doctrine of judicial review.
    - d. reduce the number of federal courts and judges.