



The Early Republic: Conflicts at Home and Abroad

1789–1800

In late 1798, wealthy Philadelphia matron Deborah Norris Logan became the target of widespread criticism. Her husband, Jefferson supporter Dr. George Logan, had undertaken a personal peace mission to France, fearing war between the United States and its former ally. When Logan's wife defended his actions, she endured a campaign unlike any experienced by an American woman. That episode suggests the political symbolism now embodied by women, the growing division between the Federalist and Republican factions, and the significance of foreign affairs in the early republic.

First to attack was the Federalist newspaper editor William Cobbett, who observed with sly sexual innuendo in his *Porcupine's Gazette* in July that "it is said that JEFFERSON went to his friend Doctor Logan's farm and spent three days there, soon after the Doctor's departure for France. Query: What did he do there?" Later Cobbett suggested that George and Deborah Logan should be publicly shamed—him, presumably, for treason and her, Cobbett implied, for adultery. Republican newspapers leaped to Deborah's defense, attacking the vulgarity of the suggestions about her and Vice President Jefferson.

Although initially Deborah Logan secluded herself at her country estate, on Jefferson's advice she returned to Philadelphia to prove she was "not afraid nor ashamed to meet the public eye." As reports emerged that her husband had had some success in quelling hostilities, she reveled in the praise showered on him. George Logan was enthusiastically welcomed home by Jeffersonian partisans. However, in January 1799, Congress, controlled by Federalists, adopted the so-called Logan Act—still in effect—which forbids private citizens from undertaking unauthorized diplomatic missions.

The Logan controversy was one of many battles in the 1790s. The fight over ratifying the Constitution presaged wide divisions over the major political, economic, and diplomatic questions confronting the republic: the extent to which authority should be centralized; the relationship between national power and states'

Chapter Outline

Building a Workable Government

First Congress | Bill of Rights | Executive and Judiciary | Debate over Slavery

Domestic Policy Under Washington and Hamilton

Washington's First Steps | Alexander Hamilton | National and State Debts | Hamilton's Financial Plan | First Bank of the United States | Interpreting the Constitution | Report on Manufactures | Whiskey Rebellion

The French Revolution and the Development of Partisan Politics

Republicans and Federalists | French Revolution | Edmond Genêt | Democratic Societies

Partisan Politics and Relations with Great Britain

Jay Treaty Debate | Bases of Partisanship | Washington's Farewell Address | Election of 1796

John Adams and Political Dissent

XYZ Affair | Quasi-War with France | Alien and Sedition Acts | Virginia and Kentucky Resolutions | Convention of 1800

VISUALIZING THE PAST Newspapers of the Early Republic

The West in the New Nation

War in the Northwest Territory | "Civilizing" the Indians | Iroquois and Cherokees

"Revolutions" at the End of the Century

Fries' Rebellion | Gabriel's Rebellion | Election of 1800

LINKS TO THE WORLD Haitian Refugees

LEGACY FOR A PEOPLE AND A NATION Dissent During Wartime

SUMMARY

rights; the formulation of foreign policy in an era of continual warfare in Europe; and the limits of dissent. Americans had not anticipated the acrimonious disagreements that rocked the 1790s or the difficulties that would develop as the United States attempted to deal with Indian nations within its borders.

Most important, Americans could not understand the division of citizens into two competing factions. In republics, they believed, the rise of such factions signified decay and corruption. Yet on numerous occasions, as with Deborah and George Logan, Federalist and Republican leaders sought to mobilize their supporters, thereby reworking the nation's political practice if not its theory. As the decade closed, Americans were still grappling with the implications of partisan politics, as evidenced by the hotly contested 1800 election.

As you read this chapter, keep the following questions in mind:

- * What major challenges confronted the new republic?
- * What disputes divided the nation's citizens?
- * How did Americans react to those disputes?

Building a Workable Government

At first, consensus appeared possible. Only a few Antifederalists ran for office in 1788, and even fewer were elected. Thus, most members of the First Congress supported a strong national government. The drafters of the Constitution had deliberately left key issues undecided, so the nationalists' domination of Congress meant that their views prevailed.

What was the purpose of the Bill of Rights?

First Congress

Congress faced four immediate tasks when it convened in April 1789: raising revenue, responding to states' calls for a bill of rights, setting up executive departments, and organizing the federal judiciary. James Madison, representing Virginia in the House of Representatives, became influential in Congress. He persuaded Congress to adopt the Revenue Act of 1789, imposing a 5 percent tariff on certain imports. Therefore, the First Congress achieved an effective national tax law.

Bill of Rights

Madison opposed additional restrictions on the national government, believing that its limited powers made a **Bill of Rights** unnecessary. But Madison subsequently changed his mind, observing to a friend that "in every Gov[ernmen]t power may oppress." When introducing nineteen proposed amendments in June, he urged fellow congressmen to respond to the people's will, noting in particular that North Carolina refused to ratify the Constitution without a Bill of Rights. After heated debates, Congress approved twelve amendments. The states ratified ten, which became part of the Constitution on December 15, 1791 (see the appendix for the Constitution and all amendments). Their adoption defused Antifederalist opposition.

The First Amendment prohibited Congress from passing any law restricting the right to freedom of religion, speech, press, peaceable assembly, or petition. The

Bill of Rights: The first ten amendments of the Constitution that guaranteed personal liberties.



Link to Madison's original proposals for the Bill of Rights.

Chronology

1789	Washington inaugurated as first president Judiciary Act organizes federal court system French Revolution begins		Pinckney's Treaty with Spain establishes southern boundary of the United States Treaty of Greenville with Miami Confederacy opens Ohio to settlement
1790	Hamilton's <i>Report on Public Credit</i> proposes assumption of state debts	1796	First contested presidential election: Adams elected president, Jefferson vice president
1791	First ten amendments (Bill of Rights) ratified First national bank chartered	1798	XYZ affair arouses American opinion against France Sedition Act penalizes dissent Virginia and Kentucky Resolutions protest suppression of dissent
1793	France declares war on Britain, Spain, and the Netherlands Washington's neutrality proclamation keeps the United States out of war Democratic societies founded, the first grassroots political organizations	1798–99	Quasi-War with France Fries's Rebellion in Pennsylvania protests taxation
1794	Whiskey Rebellion in western Pennsylvania protests taxation	1800	Franco-American Convention ends Quasi-War Gabriel's Rebellion threatens Virginia slaveowners
1795	Jay Treaty with England resolves issues remaining from the Revolution	1801	Thomas Jefferson elected president by the House of Representatives after stalemate in electoral college

Second Amendment guaranteed the right “to keep and bear arms,” because of the need for a “well-regulated Militia.” The Third Amendment limited the conditions under which troops could be quartered in private homes. The next five pertained to judicial procedures. The Fourth Amendment prohibited “unreasonable searches and seizures”; the Fifth and Sixth established the rights of accused persons; the Seventh specified the conditions for jury trials in civil (as opposed to criminal) cases; and the Eighth forbade “cruel and unusual punishments.” The Ninth and Tenth Amendments reserved to the people and the states other unspecified rights and powers.

Executive and Judiciary Congress also considered the organization of the executive branch. It agreed to continue the three administrative departments established under the Articles of Confederation: War, Foreign Affairs (renamed State), and Treasury. Congress instituted two lesser posts: the attorney general—the nation's official lawyer—and the postmaster general. Controversy arose over whether the president alone could dismiss officials whom he appointed with the Senate's consent. Ultimately, the House and Senate agreed that he had such authority. That established the principle that heads of executive departments are accountable solely to the president.

The most far-reaching law, the **Judiciary Act of 1789**, defined the federal judiciary's jurisdiction and established a six-member Supreme Court, thirteen district courts, and three appellate courts. Its most important provision, Section 25, allowed appeals from state to federal courts when cases raised certain types of constitutional questions. It presumed that Article VI of the Constitution, which stated that fed-

Judiciary Act of 1789:

Outlined the federal judiciary's jurisdiction and established the Supreme Court, as well as district and appellate courts.

eral statutes and treaties were “the supreme Law of the Land,” implied the right of appeal from state to federal courts, yet the Constitution did not explicitly permit such actions. In the nineteenth century, judges and legislators committed to states’ rights would challenge Section 25’s constitutionality.

During its first decade, the Supreme Court handled few cases of any importance, and several members resigned. But in a 1796 decision, *Ware v. Hylton*, the Court for the first time declared a state law unconstitutional. It also reviewed the constitutionality of an act of Congress, upholding its validity in the case of *Hylton v. U.S.* The most important case of the decade, *Chisholm v. Georgia* (1793), established that states could be sued in federal courts by citizens of other states. Five years later, the Eleventh Amendment to the Constitution overturned that decision.

Debate over Slavery

Constitutional provisions forbade Congress from prohibiting the importation of slaves for twenty years, but in 1790 three Quaker groups petitioned Congress to end slavery. Legislators insisted, as they would for the next seven decades, that slavery was integral to the Union and that abolition would cause bigger problems, primarily how to deal with a sizable population of freed people.

Some northern congressmen—and Benjamin Franklin—contested the southerners’ position. But Congress accepted a committee report denying it the power to halt slave importations before 1808 or emancipate slaves at any time, that authority “remaining with the several States alone.”

Domestic Policy Under Washington and Hamilton

George Washington did not seek the presidency. In 1783, he returned to Mount Vernon as a Virginia planter. But his fellow countrymen never regarded Washington as just another private citizen. Americans concurred that only George Washington had sufficient stature to serve as the republic’s first president, an office designed with him in mind. The unanimous vote of the electoral college formalized that consensus. Washington could not ignore his country’s call and headed to New York City, the nation’s capital.

How did the chartering of the Bank of the United States provoke an early constitutional debate?

Washington’s First Steps

Washington acted cautiously during his first months in office in 1789, knowing he would set precedents. When the title by which he should be addressed aroused controversy (Vice President John Adams favored “His Highness, the President of the United States of America, and Protector of their Liberties”), Washington said nothing. The accepted title soon became simply “Mr. President.” By using the heads of executive departments as chief advisers, he created the cabinet. Washington also exercised his veto power over congressional legislation sparingly—only if he thought a bill was unconstitutional.

Washington’s first major task was to choose the heads of the executive departments. For the War Department, he selected Henry Knox of Massachusetts, who was his artillery general during the war. For the State Department, he selected fellow

Alexander Hamilton: Secretary of Treasury under President George Washington.

Virginian Thomas Jefferson, who had been minister to France. For secretary of the treasury, the president chose the brilliant, ambitious **Alexander Hamilton**.

Alexander Hamilton

The illegitimate son of a Scottish aristocrat and a woman whose husband had divorced her for adultery and desertion, Hamilton was born in the British West Indies in 1757. His early years were spent in poverty, working as a mercantile clerk after his mother's death when he was eleven. In 1773, with financial support from friends, Hamilton enrolled at King's College (later Columbia University). Eighteen months later the seventeen-year-old contributed a pamphlet to the prerevolutionary publication wars. A devoted patriot, Hamilton volunteered for the American army, where in 1777 Washington appointed him as an aide, and they developed great mutual affection.

At twenty-three, Hamilton wed Elizabeth Schuyler, daughter of a wealthy New York family. After the war, he practiced law in New York City and served as a delegate to the Annapolis Convention and the Constitutional Convention. His contributions to *The Federalist* in 1788 revealed him as one of the republic's chief political thinkers.

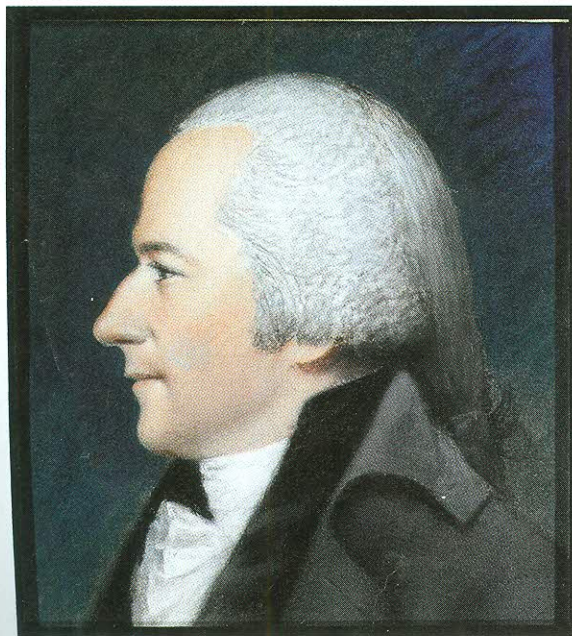
As treasury secretary and presidential adviser, Hamilton's primary loyalty lay with the nation. Caribbean-born, Hamilton had no natal ties to any state; he neither sympathized with nor fully understood demands for local autonomy. His fiscal policies aimed at consolidating national power, and he favored close ties with Britain.

Second, Hamilton cynically believed people to be motivated by economic self-interest. This set him apart from those Americans who believed public-spirited citizens would pursue the common good rather than private advantage. Hamilton's beliefs influenced the way he tackled the new nation's tangled finances.

National and State Debts

Congress ordered the new treasury secretary to assess the public debt. The country's war debts fell into three categories: those owed by the nation to foreign governments and investors, mostly to France (about \$11 million); those owed by the national government to merchants, soldiers, revolutionary bondholders (about \$27 million); and, finally, debts owed by state governments (roughly \$25 million). On the national debt, Americans recognized that, if their new government was to succeed, it would have to repay financial obligations incurred while winning independence.

State debts were another matter. Some states—namely, Virginia, Maryland, North Carolina, and Georgia—had already paid off most war debts by levying taxes and handing out land grants in lieu of money. They opposed taxing their citizens so the national government could assume other states' debts. Massachusetts, Connecticut, and South Carolina still had sizable unpaid debts and welcomed national assumption. Consolidating state debt in the hands of the national government would help concentrate power at the national level.



National Portrait Gallery, Smithsonian Institution

Alexander Hamilton, by James Sharpless, about 1796. This profile of Hamilton, painted near the end of Washington's presidency, shows the secretary of the treasury as he looked during the years of his first heated partisan battles with Thomas Jefferson and James Madison.

Hamilton's Financial Plan

In his first *Report on Public Credit* in January 1790, Hamilton proposed that Congress assume outstanding state debts, combine them with national obligations, and issue new securities covering principal and accumulated unpaid interest. Hamilton hoped to ensure that holders of the public debt—many of them wealthy merchants and speculators—had a financial stake in the new government's survival. Opposition coalesced around James Madison, whose state of Virginia had mostly eliminated its war debt and who wanted to avoid rewarding wealthy speculators who purchased debt certificates at a small fraction of their value from needy veterans and farmers.

The House initially rejected the assumption of state debts, but the Senate adopted Hamilton's plan largely intact. Compromises followed, linking the assumption bill to another controversial issue: location of the permanent national capital. Deals were struck. A southern site on the Potomac River became the capital, and the first part of Hamilton's program became law in August 1790.

First Bank of the United States

Four months later, Hamilton submitted to Congress a second report on public credit, recommending the chartering of a national bank modeled on the Bank of England.

The Bank of the United States, to be chartered for twenty years, was to be capitalized at \$10 million. Just \$2 million would come from public funds; private investors supplied the rest. The bank would act as collecting and disbursing agent for the Treasury, and its notes would become the nation's currency. But another issue loomed: did the Constitution give Congress the power to establish such a bank?

Interpreting the Constitution

James Madison thought not. He pointed out that Constitutional Convention delegates rejected a clause authorizing Congress to issue corporate charters.

President Washington sought other opinions. Attorney General Edmund Randolph and Secretary of State Thomas Jefferson agreed with Madison. Jefferson referred to Article I, Section 8, of the Constitution, which gave Congress the power "to make all Laws which shall be necessary and proper." The key word, Jefferson argued, was *necessary*: Congress could do what was needed, but not what was merely desirable. Thus, Jefferson formulated the strict-constructionist interpretation of the Constitution.

Hamilton's *Defense of the Constitutionality of the Bank*, presented in February 1791, expounded a broad-constructionist view of the Constitution. Hamilton argued that Congress could choose any means not specifically prohibited by the Constitution to achieve a constitutional end. He reasoned if the end was constitutional and the means was not *unconstitutional*, then the means was constitutional.

Washington concurred, and the bill became law. The bank proved successful, as did the debt program. The new nation's securities became desirable investments for citizens and wealthy foreigners, especially those in the Netherlands. The influx of capital, coupled with the high prices that American grain now commanded in European markets, eased farmers' debt burdens and contributed to a new prosperity.

Report on Manufactures

In December 1791, Hamilton presented to Congress his *Report on Manufactures*, his third and final prescription for the American economy. Hamilton argued that the

Report on Public Credit:

Hamilton's plan to ensure that wealthy merchants, who held the public debt, would be linked to the government's financial survival.

nation could never be truly independent as long as it relied heavily on Europe for manufactured goods. He urged Congress to promote the immigration of technicians and laborers and to support industrial development through limited use of protective tariffs. Many of Hamilton's ideas were implemented in later decades, but congressmen in 1791 believed that America's future lay in agriculture and the carrying trade. Congress rejected the report.

That year, Congress tried another of Hamilton's suggestions—an excise tax on whiskey distilled within the United States. Although proceeds from the Revenue Act of 1789 covered the interest on the national debt, the national government required additional income to fund state debts. A tax on whiskey affected few westerners—farmers who grew corn and large distillers who turned it into whiskey—and might also reduce whiskey consumption of whiskey. (Eighteenth-century Americans, notorious for their heavy drinking, consumed about twice as much alcohol per capita as today's rate.) Moreover, western farmers and distillers were Jefferson's supporters, and Hamilton saw the benefits of taxing them rather than his merchant supporters.

Whiskey Rebellion

News of the tax sparked protests in the west, where residents were upset that the government that protected them inadequately from Indian attacks was now proposing to tax them disproportionately. Unrest continued for two years on the frontiers of Pennsylvania, Maryland, and Virginia. Large groups drafted petitions protesting the tax, deliberately imitated 1760s' crowd actions, and occasionally harassed tax collectors.

President Washington maintained restraint until violence erupted in July 1794, when western Pennsylvania farmers resisted two excise tax collectors. When about seven thousand rebels convened on August 1 to plot the destruction of Pittsburgh, Washington acted to prevent a repeat of Shays's Rebellion. On August 7, he told insurgents to disperse and summoned nearly thirteen thousand militiamen. By the time federal forces marched westward in October and November, the disturbances ceased. Troops met no resistance and arrested only twenty suspects. Two men were convicted of treason, but Washington pardoned both. The importance of the **Whiskey Rebellion** lay in the forceful message it conveyed. The national government, Washington had demonstrated, would not allow violent resistance to its laws. In the republic, people dissatisfied with laws should try to peacefully amend or repeal them.

Whiskey Rebellion: Tax protest by western farmers that turned violent. Washington's response, sending in troops, demonstrated that only peaceful protests would be tolerated in a republic.

The French Revolution and the Development of Partisan Politics

Why did U.S. leaders find the rise of political factions disturbing?

By 1794, some Americans were beginning to seek change through electoral politics. In a monarchy, formal opposition groups called factions were expected. In a government of the people, however, sustained factional disagreement was considered a sign of corruption. Still, that did not halt partisanship.

Republicans and Federalists

Jefferson and Madison became convinced as early as 1792 that Hamilton's policies favoring wealthy commercial interests at the expense of agriculture would eventually impose a corrupt government on the United States. Characterizing themselves as the true heirs of the Revolution, they charged Hamilton with plotting to subvert republican principles and called themselves and their followers Republicans. Hamilton likewise accused

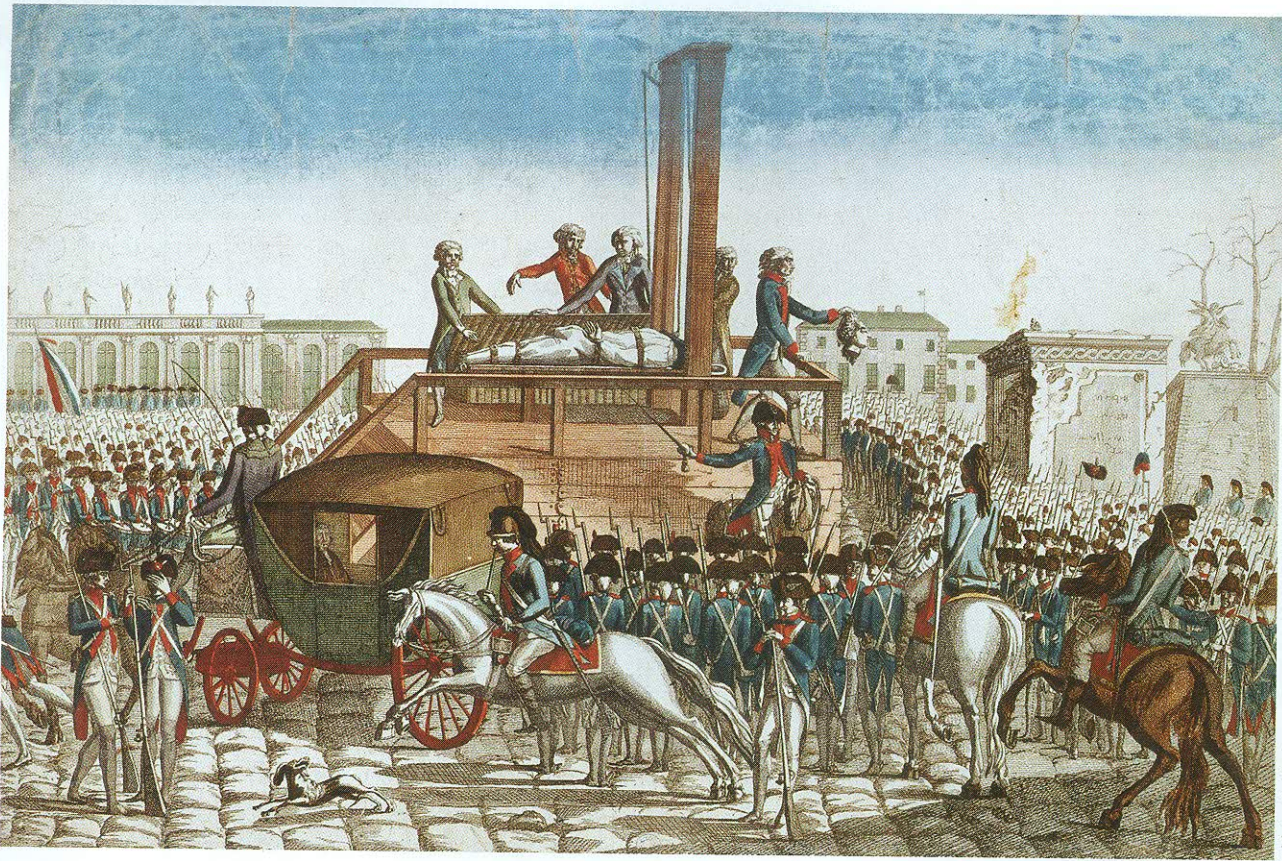
Jefferson and Madison of attempting to destroy the republic. Hamilton and his supporters called themselves Federalists to link themselves with the Constitution. Newspapers aligned with the two sides published attacks on political opponents.

Washington tried to remain aloof from the political dispute dividing his chief advisers. The growing controversy persuaded him to promote political unity by seeking office again in 1792. But beginning in 1793, developments in foreign affairs magnified the disagreements, for France (America's wartime ally) and Great Britain (America's most important trading partner) resumed the periodic hostilities that originated a century earlier.

French Revolution

In 1789, many Americans welcomed the news of the French Revolution. The French people's success in overthrowing an oppressive monarchy enabled Americans to see themselves as the vanguard of an inevitable trend that would reshape the world in republican terms. By 1793, violence in France continued, and political leaders rapidly succeeded each other. Executions mounted; the king was beheaded early that year. Although many Americans, including Jefferson and Madison, retained sympathy for the revolution, others—among them Alexander Hamilton—cited France as a prime example of the perversion of republicanism.

Debates within the United States intensified when the newly republican France became enmeshed in conflict with other European nations. Seeking to keep neighboring monarchies from intervening and hoping to spread republicanism, French



Erich Lessing/Art Resource, NY

The violence of the French Revolution, especially the guillotining of King Louis XVI, shocked Americans, causing many to question whether the United States should remain that nation's ally.

leaders declared war on Austria and then, in 1793, on Britain, Spain, and Holland. That confronted the Americans with a dilemma. The 1778 Treaty of Alliance with France bound them as allies “forever.” Yet the United States was connected to Great Britain through a shared history, language, and renewed economic ties. Americans still purchased most of their manufactured goods from Great Britain and, because U.S. revenues depended heavily on import tariffs, the nation’s economic health required uninterrupted trade with England.

Edmond Genêt: French minister to the United States.

Edmond Genêt

The situation intensified in April 1793, when **Edmond Genêt**, a representative of the French government, arrived in Charleston, South Carolina. Genêt’s arrival made President Washington wonder. Should he receive Genêt, thus officially recognizing the French revolutionary government? Or should he proclaim neutrality?

Washington resolved his dilemma by receiving Genêt but also issuing a proclamation that the United States would adopt “a conduct friendly and impartial toward the belligerent powers.” Federalist newspapers defended the proclamation, while Republicans only reluctantly accepted the enormously popular neutrality policy.

Genêt’s faction fell from power in Paris, and he sought political asylum in the United States. But the domestic divisions Genêt helped to widen were perpetuated by clubs called Democratic societies, formed by Americans sympathetic to the French Revolution and worried about the Washington administration.

Democratic Societies

More than forty Democratic societies organized between 1793 and 1800. Members saw themselves as seeking the same goal as the 1760s resistance movement: protecting people’s liberties against encroachments by corrupt and self-serving rulers. They protested government fiscal and foreign policy, repeatedly proclaiming their belief in “the equal rights of man,” particularly free speech, free press, and free assembly. Like the Sons of Liberty, the Democratic societies comprised chiefly artisans and craftsmen, although professionals, farmers, and merchants also joined. They allied with congressional Republicans.

The rapid spread of citizens’ groups outspokenly critical of the administration disturbed Hamilton and Washington. Calling them dangerously subversive, the groups’ “real design,” a Federalist newspaper asserted, was “to involve the country in war, to assume the reins of government and tyrannize over the people.” The counterattack climaxed in the fall of 1794, when Washington accused the societies of fomenting the Whiskey Rebellion. As the first organized political dissenters in the United States, Democratic societies alarmed officials, who had not yet accepted the idea that one component of a free government was organized loyal opposition.

Partisan Politics and Relations with Great Britain

What fueled the growing partisanship in the new republic at the end of the eighteenth century?

In 1794, George Washington dispatched Chief Justice John Jay to London to negotiate unresolved questions in Anglo-American relations. The United States wanted to establish freedom of the seas and to assert its right, as a neutral nation, to trade freely with both combatants. Further, Great Britain still held posts in the American Northwest, thus violating

the 1783 peace treaty. Settlers there believed the British were responsible for renewed warfare with neighboring Indians. Americans also wanted a commercial treaty and sought compensation for the slaves who left with the British army after the war.

Jay Treaty Debate

The negotiations proved difficult. Britain agreed to evacuate the western forts and ease restrictions on American trade to England and the Caribbean. The treaty established two arbitration commissions—one to deal with prewar debts Americans owed to British creditors and the other to hear claims for captured American merchant ships—but Britain refused slaveowners compensation for lost bondspeople. Most Americans, including the president, expressed dissatisfaction with some treaty clauses.

The Senate debated the **Jay Treaty** in secret, and the public only learned of its provisions after ratification in late June 1795. Protests followed; newspaper essays and popular gatherings urged Washington to reject the treaty. Southern planters criticized the lack of compensation for runaway slaves and objected to the commission on prewar debts, which might make them pay obligations dating back to the 1760s. Federalists countered with their own meetings and essays, contending that the Jay Treaty would prove preferable to no treaty at all. The president signed the pact in mid-August. One opportunity remained to prevent it from taking effect: Congress had to appropriate funds and, according to the Constitution, appropriation bills had to originate in the House of Representatives.

Washington delayed submitting the treaty to the House until March 1796, futilely hoping the opposition would have dissipated. During the debate, Republicans argued against the appropriations, and they asked Washington to give the House all negotiations documents. In resisting the request, Washington established a power still used today—executive privilege, in which the president may withhold information from Congress if he deems it necessary.

The treaty's opponents initially commanded a congressional majority, but soon pressure mounted for appropriating the necessary funds, fostered by a Federalist campaign targeting middle-state congressmen whose districts would benefit from approval. Petitions contended that failure to fund the treaty would lead to war with Britain, thus endangering Pennsylvania frontier settlements and New York and New Jersey commercial interests. Further, Federalists linked the Jay Treaty with the more popular **Pinckney's Treaty**. In 1795, Thomas Pinckney of South Carolina negotiated a treaty with Spain giving the United States navigation privileges on the Mississippi River and the right to land and store goods at New Orleans tax free. The overwhelming support for Pinckney's Treaty helped to overcome opposition to the Jay Treaty. In late April, the House appropriated the money by 51 to 48. The vote divided along partisan and regional lines: all but two southerners opposed the treaty; all but three congressional Federalists supported it; and a majority of middle-state representatives voted yes.

The Federalists' campaign to sway public opinion ironically violated their fundamental philosophy of government—that ordinary people should defer to the judgment of elected leaders. The Federalists had won the battle, but in the long run they lost the war, for Republicans proved more effective in appealing to the citizenry.

Jay Treaty: Pact that sought to resolve mounting tensions between Britain and the United States in the years after the Revolution. Britain agreed to relinquish control of its western U.S. posts, establish commissions to receive claims for ships damaged by British seizures, and broaden U.S. access to trade with the West and British.

Pinckney's Treaty: Also called the Treaty of San Lorenzo, it won westerners the right of duty-free access to New Orleans and the use of the Mississippi River for commerce.

Bases of Partisanship

The terms used by Jefferson and Madison (the people versus aristocrats) or by Hamilton and Washington (true patriots versus subversive rabble) do not adequately explain growing divisions in the electorate. Differences between agrarian and commercial interests do not cover it either, as more than 90 percent of Americans lived in rural areas. Nor did the divisions in the 1790s simply repeat the Federalist-Antifederalist debate of 1787–1788. Although most Antifederalists became Republicans, the party's leaders, Madison and Jefferson, had supported the Constitution.

Republicans, especially prominent in the southern and middle states, were confident and optimistic about politics and the economy. Southern planters foresaw a prosperous future based partly on westward expansion, which they expected to dominate. Republicans employed democratic rhetoric to win over small farmers south of New England and ethnic groups—especially Irish, Scots, and Germans. Artisans also joined the coalition. Republicans emphasized developing America's resources and remained sympathetic to France.

Federalists, concentrated among the commercial interests of New England, came mostly from English stock. They stressed the need for order, hierarchy, and obedience to authority. Wealthy New England merchants aligned with the Federalists, as did the region's farmers who, prevented from expanding production because of New England's poor soil, gravitated toward the more conservative party. To Federalist eyes, potential enemies—internal and external—threatened the nation, necessitating a protective alliance with Great Britain. Given the dangers posed by European warfare, Federalists' vision of international affairs may have been accurate. But because Federalists offered little hope of a better future, Republicans ultimately prevailed.

Washington's Farewell Address

After the treaty debate, wearied by criticism, George Washington decided to retire. In September, Washington published his Farewell Address, most of which Hamilton wrote. In it Washington outlined two principles that guided American foreign policy until the late 1940s: to maintain commercial but not political ties to other nations and to enter no permanent alliances. He also stressed America's uniqueness—its exceptionalism—and the need for independent action in foreign affairs, today called unilateralism.

Some interpret Washington's desire to end partisan strife as a call for politicians to consider the good of the whole nation. But given the impending presidential election, the Farewell Address appears as an attack on the Republican opposition. Washington advocated unity behind the Federalist banner. Both Federalists and Republicans saw themselves as the true heirs of the Revolution and perceived their opponents as misguided, unpatriotic troublemakers.

election of 1796: Federalist John Adams won by three votes and, as the second-highest vote-getter in the electoral college, Thomas Jefferson became vice president.

Election of 1796

The presidential **election of 1796** saw the first serious contest for the position. Federalists in Congress put forward Vice President John Adams, with the diplomat Thomas Pinckney as his running mate. Congressional Republicans chose Thomas Jefferson as their presidential candidate; the lawyer, Revolutionary War veteran, and politician Aaron Burr of New York ran for vice president.

Most state legislatures appointed electors, and the method of voting in the electoral college did not account for the possibility of party slates. The Constitution's

drafters had not foreseen the development of competing political organizations, so there was no way to support one person for president and another for vice president. The electors voted for two people. The man with the highest total became president; the second highest, vice president.

That procedure was the Federalists' undoing. Adams won the presidency with 71 votes, but Jefferson won 68 votes, 9 more than Pinckney, to become vice president. The incoming administration was thus politically divided. The president and vice president, once allies, became bitter enemies.

John Adams and Political Dissent

What was the underlying purpose of the Alien and Sedition Acts of 1798?

As president, John Adams never abandoned an outdated notion that the president should be above politics and factionalism. Thus, Adams kept Washington's cabinet intact, despite its key members' allegiance to his chief Federalist rival, Alexander Hamilton. Adams was often passive, letting others (usually Hamilton) lead when he should have. But Adams's detachment did enable him to weather the greatest international crisis yet: the Quasi-War with France.

XYZ Affair

The Jay Treaty improved America's relationship with Great Britain, but it provoked France to retaliate by ordering its ships to seize American vessels carrying British goods. In response, Congress authorized ship building and stockpiling weapons and ammunition. President Adams also sent three commissioners to Paris to negotiate a settlement. For months, the commissioners sought talks with Talleyrand, the French foreign minister, but Talleyrand's agents demanded a bribe of \$250,000 first. The Americans refused. Adams informed Congress of the impasse and recommended increases in defense appropriations.

Convinced that Adams deliberately sabotaged negotiations, congressional Republicans insisted that the dispatches be turned over to Congress. Adams complied, aware that releasing the reports would work to his advantage. He withheld only the names of the French agents, referring to them as X, Y, and Z. The revelation that the Americans were treated with contempt stimulated anti-French sentiment in the United States and became known as the **XYZ Affair**. Cries for war resounded. Congress abrogated the Treaty of Alliance and authorized American ships to seize French vessels.

XYZ Affair: French demand for bribes from American negotiators that triggered great anger.

Quasi-War with France

Thus began an undeclared war with France fought in Caribbean waters between warships of the U.S. Navy and French privateers. Although Americans initially suffered heavy merchant shipping losses, by early 1799 the U.S. Navy established its superiority. Its ships captured eight French privateers and naval vessels, easing the threat to America's vital Caribbean trade.

Republicans, who opposed war and sympathized with France, could not quell anti-French feelings. Because Agent Y boasted of a "French party in America," Federalists accused Republicans of traitorous designs. A New York newspaper declared that anyone who remained "lukewarm" after reading the XYZ dispatches "must have a soul black enough to be fit for treason Strategems and spoils."

Alien and Sedition Acts: A series of laws passed in 1789 under the label of national security but that were intended to suppress dissent and block the rise of the Republican faction.

Alien and Sedition Acts Now that the country seemed to see the truth of what Federalists argued since the Whiskey Rebellion in 1794—that Republicans were subversive foreign agents—Federalists sought to codify that belief into law. In 1798, the Federalist-controlled Congress adopted four laws known as the **Alien and Sedition Acts**, intended to suppress dissent and to prevent further growth of the Republican faction.

Three of the acts targeted recently arrived immigrants, whom Federalists accurately suspected of sympathizing with Republicans. The Naturalization Act lengthened the residency period required for citizenship and ordered resident aliens to register with the federal government. The two Alien Acts provided for the detention of enemy aliens in wartime and gave the president authority to deport any alien he deemed dangerous to national security.

The fourth statute, the Sedition Act, outlawed conspiracies to prevent enforcement of federal laws, punishable by five years in prison and a \$5,000 fine. And writing, printing, or uttering “false, scandalous and malicious” statements against the government or the president “with intent to defame...or to bring them or either of them, into contempt or disrepute” became a crime punishable by up to two years’ imprisonment and a fine of \$2,000. Today, a law punishing speech alone would be unconstitutional. But in the eighteenth century, when organized political opposition was suspect, many Americans supported the Sedition Act’s free speech restrictions.

The Sedition Act led to fifteen indictments and ten guilty verdicts. Among those convicted were a congressman and former newspaper editor, Matthew Lyon of Vermont; and James Callender, a Scots immigrant and scandalmonger, whose exposés forced Alexander Hamilton to acknowledge an extramarital affair. After turning his attention to President Adams, Callender was convicted, fined, and jailed for nine months. Republican newspaper editors nevertheless continued their criticisms of Federalists, energized rather than quashed by the persecution.



Link to William Duane’s *A Letter to George Washington, President of the United States*.



Link to the Virginia and Kentucky Resolutions.

Virginia and Kentucky Resolutions

Jefferson and Madison combated the acts in another way. Petitioning the Federalist-controlled Congress to repeal the laws would fail, and Federalist judges refused to allow accused individuals to question the Sedition Act’s constitutionality. Accordingly, the Republican leaders turned to the state legislatures. Concealing their role to avoid being indicted for sedition, Jefferson and Madison drafted resolutions that were introduced into the Kentucky and Virginia legislatures in the fall of 1798. Because a compact among the states created the Constitution, the resolutions contended, people speaking through their states had a right to judge the constitutionality of federal measures. Both pronounced the Alien and Sedition Acts unconstitutional, and thus advanced the doctrine later known as nullification.

Although they stood alone, the **Virginia and Kentucky Resolutions** had considerable influence. First, they placed the opposition party in the revolutionary tradition of resistance to tyrannical authority. Second, their theory of union inspired the Hartford Convention of 1814 and southern states’ rights advocates in the 1830s and thereafter. Jefferson and Madison identified a key constitutional issue: How far could states go in opposing the national government? The question would not be definitively answered until the Civil War.

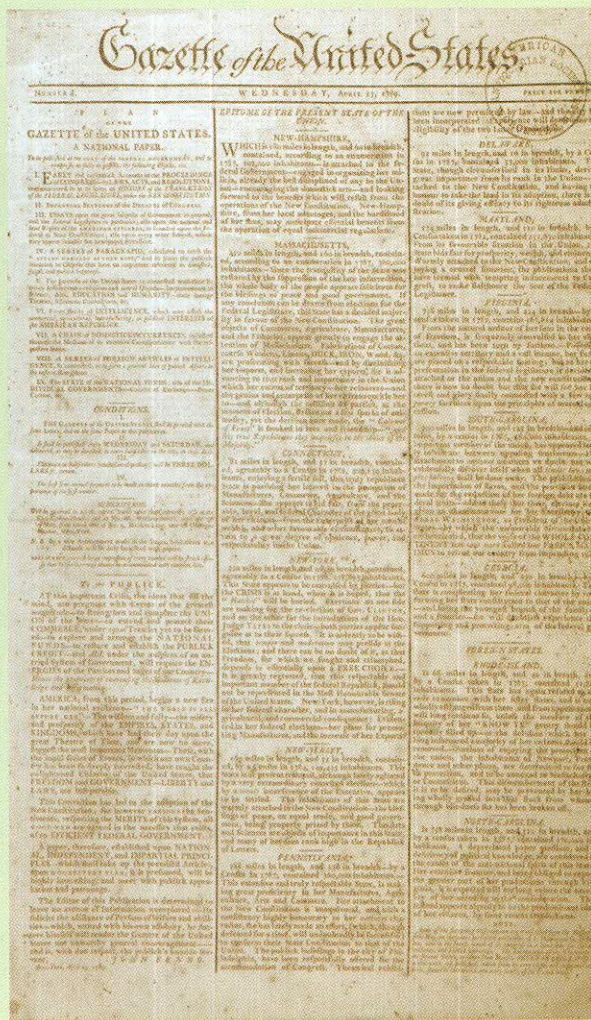
Virginia and Kentucky Resolutions: Jefferson’s and Madison’s response to the Alien and Sedition Acts. The Resolution stressed states’ rights and the power of nullification in response to Alien and Sedition Acts.

Visualizing the Past

Newspapers of the Early Republic

In the 1790s newspaper editors and publishers, unlike today, did not attempt to present news objectively, and indeed, none of their readers expected them to do so. Instead, newspapers were linked to the rapidly expanding political factions of the new nation—the partisan groupings (not yet political parties in the modern sense) terming themselves *Federalists* and *Republicans*. The “official” paper of the Federalists was *The Gazette of the United States* (colonial papers supported by individual governments too had been called gazettes—just as the

London Gazette was tied to the English government). Among the Republicans’ many allied newspapers was *The New-York Journal*, and *Patriotic Register*. A reader comparing the front pages of two randomly selected issues could see at a glance the differences between the two. *The Gazette of the United States* filled its first page with sober news articles, whereas the face *The New-York Journal* presented to the world was consumed entirely with advertisements, some headed by intriguing design elements. Which would appeal more directly to America’s artisans and forward-thinking agriculturalists: the dull newsprint of the Federalists, or the eye-catching ads of the Republicans?



Convention of 1800

Federalists split over France. Hamilton and his supporters called for a declaration legitimizing the undeclared naval war. Adams, though, received private signals—among them George Logan's report—that the French government regretted its treatment of the American commissioners.

Adams dispatched William Vans Murray to Paris to negotiate with Napoleon Bonaparte, France's new leader. The United States sought compensation for ships France had seized since 1793 and abrogation of the treaty of 1778. The Convention of 1800, which ended the Quasi-War, provided the latter but not the former. Still, it freed the United States to follow the independent diplomatic course George Washington urged in his Farewell Address.

The West in the New Nation

How did the new nation begin to expand its boundaries westward?

By the end of the eighteenth century, the nation added three states (Vermont, Kentucky, and Tennessee) and more than 1 million people to the nearly 4 million in the 1790 census. It also nominally controlled the land east of the Mississippi River and north of Spanish Florida. Control of the land north of the Ohio River was achieved only after considerable bloodshed, for the land was dominated by a powerful western confederacy of eight Indian nations led by the Miamis.

War in the Northwest Territory

General Arthur St. Clair, first governor of the Northwest Territory, futilely tried to open more land to settlement through failed treaty negotiations with the western confederacy in early 1789. Subsequently, Little Turtle, the confederacy's war chief, defeated forces led by General Josiah Harmer (1790) and by St. Clair (1791) in battles near the present Indiana and Ohio border. More than six hundred of St. Clair's men died, and more were wounded, in the United States' worst defeat in frontier history.

In 1793, the Miami Confederacy declared that peace would come only if the United States recognized the Ohio River as its northwestern boundary. But the national government refused. A reorganized army under the Revolutionary War hero General Anthony Wayne defeated the confederacy in August 1794 at the Battle of Fallen Timbers (near present-day Toledo, Ohio). Negotiating successfully with the confederacy was crucial for the new nation, because otherwise warfare would continue as American settlers continued west. The United States lacked the resources for a prolonged frontier conflict, so Wayne reached an agreement with the confederacy in August 1795.

The resulting Treaty of Greenville gave the United States the right to settle much of what was to become Ohio. Indians received the acknowledgment they had long sought: American recognition of their rights to the soil. At Greenville, the United States formally accepted the principle of Indian sovereignty, by virtue of residence, over lands native peoples had not ceded. Never again would the U.S. government claim that it acquired Indian territory solely through negotiation with a European or North American country.

Pinckney's Treaty with Spain that year established the 31st parallel as the boundary between the United States and Florida. Spanish influence in the Old Southwest

raised questions about the loyalty of American settlers in the region, much of it still unceded and occupied by Creeks, Cherokees, and other Indians. A Southwest Ordinance (1790) attempted to organize the territory; by permitting slavery, it made the region attractive to slaveholders.

"Civilizing" the Indians

Even Indian peoples who lived independent of federal authority came within the orbit of U.S. influence. The nation's stated goal was to "civilize" them. Henry Knox, secretary of war, contended in 1789 that the government should "impart our knowledge of cultivation and the arts to the aboriginals of the country." The first step, Knox suggested, should be to introduce to Indian peoples "a love for exclusive property" by giving livestock to individual Indians. The **Indian Trade and Intercourse Act of 1793** codified Knox's plan, promising that the federal government would supply Indians with animals and agricultural implements, and instructors.

The plan incorrectly posited that Indians' traditional commitment to communal landowning could be overcome, and it ignored their centuries-long agricultural experience. Policymakers focused on Indian men: because they hunted, male Indians were "savages" who should be "civilized" by learning to farm. That women tradi-

Indian Trade and Intercourse

Act of 1793: Series of U.S. laws that attempted to "civilize" Indians according to European American standards.



Greenville County Museum of Art

In 1805, an unidentified artist painted Benjamin Hawkins, a trader and U.S. agent to the Indians of the Southeast, at the Creek agency near Macon, Georgia. Hawkins introduced European-style agriculture to the Creeks, who are shown here with vegetables from their fields. Throughout the eastern United States, Indian nations had to make similar adaptations of their traditional lifestyles in order to maintain their group identity.

tionally farmed was irrelevant because, to officials, Indian women—like those of European descent—should confine themselves to child rearing, household chores, and home manufacturing.

Iroquois and Cherokees The Iroquois Confederacy was devastated by the war. Restricted to small reservations increasingly surrounded by Anglo-American farmlands, men could no longer hunt and often spent their days in idle carousing. Quaker missionaries started a demonstration farm among the Senecas to teach men to plow, but women showed greater interest. The same was true among the Cherokees of Georgia. As their southern hunting territories were reduced, Cherokee men did begin to raise cattle and hogs, but they startled reformers by treating livestock like wild game, allowing the animals to run free and shooting them when needed. Men also started to plow the fields, although Cherokee women continued to handle cultivation and harvest.

Iroquois men became more receptive to the Quakers' lessons after the spring of 1799, when a Seneca named Handsome Lake experienced some remarkable visions. Like earlier prophets, Handsome Lake preached that Indian peoples should renounce alcohol, gambling, and other destructive European customs. He directed followers to reorient men's and women's work assignments as the Quakers advocated, as he recognized that only by adopting the European sexual division of labor could the Iroquois retain an autonomous existence.

"Revolutions" at the End of the Century

What gave rise to new potential revolutions in America at the end of the eighteenth century?

Three events at the end of the eighteenth century were real or potential revolutions: Fries's Rebellion, Gabriel's Rebellion, and the election of Thomas Jefferson. Each mirrored the tensions and uncertainties of the young republic. The Fries rebels resisted national authority to tax. Gabriel and his followers challenged the slave system crucial to the Chesapeake economy. And the venomous presidential election of 1800 exposed a structural flaw in the Constitution that had to be corrected.

Fries's Rebellion

The tax resistance named for Revolutionary War veteran John Fries arose among German American farmers in Pennsylvania's Lehigh Valley in 1798–1799. To finance the Quasi-War, Congress enacted taxes on land, houses, and legal documents. German Americans, imbued with revolutionary ideals (at least two-fifths were veterans), regarded the taxes as a threat to their liberties and livelihoods. Asserting a right of resistance to unconstitutional laws, they raised liberty poles, signed petitions to Congress, and nonviolently prevented assessors from evaluating their homes. A federal judge ordered the arrest of twenty resisters. In response, in March 1799 Fries led 120 militiamen to Bethlehem, where they surrounded a tavern temporarily housing the prisoners. Fearing a violent confrontation, a federal marshal let the men go. Fries and many of his neighbors were tried; he and two others were convicted of treason; thirty-two more, of violating the Sedition Act. Although Fries and the other "traitors" were sentenced to hang, Adams pardoned them two days before their scheduled execution. Still, the region's residents remained, Republican partisans.



Links to the World

Haitian Refugees

Less than a decade after winning independence, the United States confronted its first immigration crisis. Among the approximately 600,000 residents of St. Domingue in the early 1790s, about 100,000 were free people, almost all of them slaveowners; half were whites, the rest mulattos. When after the French Revolution those free mulattos sought greater social and political equality, slaves seized the opportunity to revolt. By 1793, they triumphed, led by former slave, Toussaint L'Ouverture. In 1804, they ousted the French, establishing the republic of Haiti. Thousands of whites and mulattos, accompanied by as many slaves as they could transport, sought asylum in the United States.

American political leaders nonetheless feared the consequences of their arrival. Southern plantation owners worried that slaves so familiar with ideas of freedom and equality would mingle with their bondpeople. Many were uncomfortable with the immigration of numerous

free people of color. Most southern states adopted laws forbidding the entry of Haitian slaves and free mulattos, but they were difficult to enforce, as was a similar congressional act. More than fifteen thousand refugees—white, black, and mixed-race—flooded into the United States and Spanish Louisiana. Many ended up in Virginia or Charleston, Savannah, and New Orleans.

In New Orleans and Charleston, the influx of mulattos aroused a heightened color consciousness that placed light-skinned people at the top of a hierarchy of people of color. After the United States purchased Louisiana in 1803, the number of free people of color there almost doubled in three years, largely because of a final surge of immigration from Haiti. In Virginia, the Haitian revolt inspired slaves in 1800 to plan the incident now known as Gabriel's Rebellion.

The Haitian refugees thus linked European-Americans and African Americans to events in the West Indies.



Louisiana State Museum

A free woman of color in Louisiana early in the nineteenth century, possibly one of the refugees from Haiti. Esteban Rodriguez Mir, named governor of Spanish Louisiana in 1782, ordered all slave and free black women to wear head wraps rather than hats—which were reserved for whites—but this woman and many others subverted his order by nominally complying, but nevertheless creating elaborate headdresses.

Gabriel's Rebellion

Like their white compatriots, African Americans became familiar with concepts of liberty and equality during the Revolution. They, too, witnessed the benefits of fighting collectively for freedom. Buoyed by news of the successful slave revolt in St. Domingue in 1793, Gabriel, an enslaved Virginia blacksmith, planned the second end-of-the-century revolution.

For months, Gabriel visited Sunday services at black Baptist and Methodist congregations, where bondspeople gathered free of their owners. Gabriel first recruited other skilled African Americans who like himself lived in semi-freedom under minimal supervision. Next, he enlisted rural slaves. The rebels planned to attack Richmond on the night of August 30, 1800; set fire to the city; seize the state capitol; and capture the governor, James Monroe. At that point, Gabriel believed, other slaves and poor whites would join in.

Heavy rain forced a postponement. Several planters then learned of the plot. Gabriel avoided arrest for weeks, but militia troops apprehended and interrogated other rebel leaders. Twenty-six rebels, including Gabriel, were hanged. Ironically, only slaves who betrayed their fellows won freedom as a result of the rebellion.

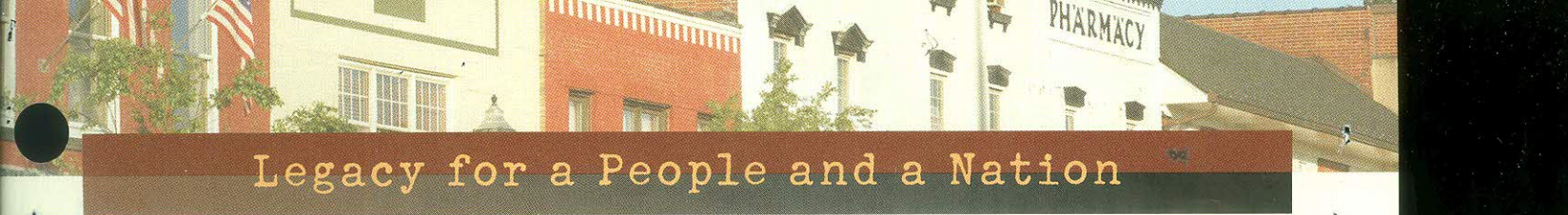
At his trial, one of Gabriel's followers told his judges that, like George Washington, "I have adventured my life in endeavouring to obtain the liberty of my countrymen, and am a willing sacrifice in their cause." Southern state legislatures responded by increasing the severity of slave laws. Talk of emancipation ceased in the South, and slavery became more firmly entrenched.

Election of 1800

The third end-of-the-century revolution was a Republican "takeover"—the election of Thomas Jefferson as president and a Congress dominated by Republicans. Prior to November 1800, Federalists and Republicans campaigned for congressional seats and maneuvered to control the electoral college. Both sides wanted to avoid reproducing the divided results of 1796. Republicans again nominated Thomas Jefferson and Aaron Burr; Federalists named John Adams, with Charles Cotesworth Pinckney of South Carolina as vice president. The network of Republican newspapers forged in the fires of Sedition Act prosecutions vigorously promoted the Jeffersonian cause. Jefferson and Burr had tied with 73, while Adams had 64 and Pinckney 63. Under the Constitution, the election had to be decided in the existing House of Representatives.

Balloting lasted six days; in the end, a deal was struck that gave Jefferson the presidency on the thirty-sixth ballot. A crucial consequence of the election was the adoption of the Twelfth Amendment, which provided that electors would henceforth cast separate ballots for president and vice president.

The defeated Federalists turned to strengthening their hold on the judiciary. President Adams named his secretary of state, John Marshall, chief justice; his thirty-four years of service left a lasting imprint on constitutional interpretation. Adams spent his last hours in office on March 3, 1801, appointing so-called midnight justices to positions created in the hastily adopted Judiciary Act of 1801. Federalists thus hoped to prevent Jefferson from exerting immediate influence on the judicial branch.



Legacy for a People and a Nation

Dissent During Wartime

The Quasi-War with France in 1798 and 1799 brought the first attempt to suppress dissent. By criminalizing dissenting speech, the Sedition Act of 1798 tried to quiet the Republicans' criticism of the war and President John Adams. Fifteen men were indicted and ten fined and jailed (including a congressman) after being convicted under the statute.

Although Americans might assume that their right to free speech under the First Amendment—now more fully accepted than two centuries ago—protects dissenters during wartime, history suggests otherwise. Every conflict has stimulated efforts by government and individuals to suppress dissenters. During the Civil War, the Union jailed civilian Confederate sympathizers; during the First World War, the government deported immigrant aliens who too vocally criticized the war effort. World War II brought the silencing of isolationists' voices, denying those who opposed American entry into the war public outlets for their ideas.

Americans remain divided over whether the proper course of action in the 1960s and 1970s was dissent from, or acquiescence to, government policy. The USA PATRIOT Act, adopted after the September 11, 2001 attacks, removed long-standing restrictions on federal government surveillance of citizens, controversially granting access to library records. Criticism of the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan has raised questions: Do newspapers that publish classified information or pictures of abused prisoners overstep their bounds? Can political figures censure the conduct of the wars without seeming unpatriotic?

Freedom of speech is never easy to maintain, and wartime conditions make it tougher. When the nation comes under attack, many patriotic Americans argue that dissent should cease. Others contend that people must always have the right to speak freely. Events in the United States since the 9/11 attacks suggest that this legacy remains contentious for the American people.

Summary

As the nineteenth century began, inhabitants of the United States faced changes. Indians east of the Mississippi River surrendered some traditions to preserve others. Some African Americans struggled unsuccessfully to free themselves from slavery, then confronted more constraints under increasingly restrictive laws.

For European-Americans, the first eleven years under the Constitution established enduring precedents for congressional, presidential, and judicial action—among them establishment of the cabinet, interpretations of key clauses of the Constitution, and stirrings of judicial review of state and federal legislation. Building on successful negotiations with Spain (Pinckney's Treaty), Britain (the Jay Treaty), and France (the Convention of 1800), the United States developed its diplomatic independence.

Yet the 1790s spawned debates over foreign and domestic policy and saw the beginnings of organized factionalism and grassroots politicking, if not yet formal parties. The Whiskey and Fries Rebellions showed that regional conflicts persisted. The waging of an undeclared war against France proved contentious. In 1801, the Jeffersonian ideal of agrarian, decentralized republicanism prevailed over Alexander Hamilton's vision of a powerful centralized economy and strong national government.

Chapter Review

Building a Workable Government

What was the purpose of the Bill of Rights?

Several states threatened not to ratify the Constitution because they feared it would create a too powerful national government. Leaders from states such as North Carolina thought that a bill of rights would expressly state key liberties of the people that should be protected, among them freedom of the press, freedom of speech, freedom of religion, and the right to peaceable assembly. At first, James Madison thought the Bill of Rights was unnecessary, but he changed his mind and submitted nineteen amendments—ten of which the states ratified—that were added to the Constitution on December 15, 1791 and later known as the Bill of Rights.

Domestic Policy Under Washington and Hamilton

How did the chartering of the Bank of the United States provoke an early constitutional debate?

Treasury Secretary Alexander Hamilton asked Congress to charter a national bank, modeled on England's, which would act as a collecting and disbursing agent for the treasury and the source for national currency. Some political leaders were unsure if the Constitution gave it the power to establish a bank. Some, like James Madison and Thomas Jefferson, took a strict-constructionist interpretation of the Constitution, arguing that it allowed Congress only to make laws deemed "necessary"—not merely what was desirable. Hamilton took a broad-constructionist view, stating that Congress could use any means not prohibited by the Constitution to achieve a constitutional end. President Washington agreed, and the bill establishing the Bank of the United States became law.

The French Revolution and the Development of Partisan Politics

Why did U.S. leaders find the rise of political factions disturbing?

In the new republic, leaders had not yet come to understand or embrace dissent as a natural part of democratic government. Factions were seen as linked to

monarchies and deemed a sign of corruption in republics. Washington tried to smooth over discord when Jefferson and Madison critiqued treasury secretary Alexander Hamilton's policies as favoring commercial interests over agriculture. Both sides accused the other of trying to subvert republican principles or destroy the new republic. Similarly, when dozens of Democratic societies sprang up in the 1790s, Washington and Hamilton feared their rapid growth as subversive and dangerous to the unity they believed necessary for the republic's survival.

Partisan Politics and Relations with Great Britain

What fueled the growing partisanship in the new republic at the end of the eighteenth century?

Several different factors divided people and leaders. Debates over who the true patriots were fueled some discord, as did growing differences between agrarian and commercial interests. Republicans optimistically put their faith in the nation's future prosperity, enticing southerners, small farmers, and artisans to ally with them. Federalists, on the other hand, were often New England merchants who sought order and organized authority. Foreign affairs also divided the Republicans and Federalists. As tensions mounted between France and Great Britain in 1793, Americans, too, took sides. Federalists supported an ongoing alliance with Great Britain, which they thought would protect their interests from internal and external enemies, while many others wanted to support France's new revolutionary government.

John Adams and Political Dissent

What was the underlying purpose of the Alien and Sedition Acts of 1798?

Adopted by the Federalist-controlled Congress, these acts were designed to suppress dissent—still seen as dangerous and subversive rather than a natural part of a republic—and weaken the competing Republican faction. Hence, the acts targeted recent immigrants, typically Republican supporters, by lengthening the residency requirement for citizenship among other rules, as well as allowing the president to detain or deport any alien considered dangerous to national security. The Sedition Act

outlawed antigovernment conspiracies and curbed free speech by making the writing or uttering of false, malicious or scandalous statements against the government illegal. Although the Federalists expected the acts to weaken their critics, the laws only increased dissent.

The West in the New Nation

How did the new nation begin to expand its boundaries westward?

The United States nominally controlled the land east of the Mississippi and north of Spanish Florida, and later, through warfare and treaty, managed to extend its northernmost boundary to the Ohio River. Initially, leaders attempted to negotiate with Indians living there for the land; when that failed, war with eight Indian nations ensued, culminating in 1795 with the Treaty of Greenville. This agreement allowed the United States to settle most of what would become Ohio in exchange for acknowledging the principle of Indian sovereignty—by virtue of residence—over lands that had not been ceded.

“Revolutions” at the End of the Century

What gave rise to new potential revolutions in America at the end of the eighteenth century?

Three events revealed unresolved issues—and growing tensions—in the new republic. First, Fries’s Rebellion questioned the power of the central government to tax, seeing it—much as early revolutionaries had—as a threat to personal liberties and livelihoods. Second, Gabriel’s Rebellion of semifree blacks sought to challenge the slave system in the Chesapeake (but ended

up inspiring stricter slave laws in the South). And finally the hotly contested 1800 presidential election revealed a structural flaw in the Constitution, which required that presidential electors vote for two men without designating one as president and the other as vice president, thus creating the tie between Jefferson and Burr. It led to the Twelfth Amendment, which provided that electors cast separate ballots for presidential and vice presidential candidates.

Suggestions for Further Reading

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- Joseph J. Ellis, *Founding Brothers: The Revolutionary Generation* (2000)
- James Horn, Jan Ellen Lewis, and Peter S. Onuf, eds., *The Revolution of 1800: Democracy, Race, and the New Republic* (2002)
- Richard Labunski, *James Madison and the Struggle for the Bill of Rights* (2006)
- David Andrew Nichols, *Red Gentlemen & White Savages: Indians, Federalists, and the Search for Order on the American Frontier* (2008)
- Jeffrey L. Pasley, “The Tyranny of Printers”: *Newspaper Politics in the Early American Republic* (2001)
- Thomas P. Slaughter, *The Whiskey Rebellion* (1986)



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www.cengagebrain.com