Ch. 11: Political Developments in the Early Republic

Alexander Hamilton

Thomas Jefferson
• On April 30, 1789, George Washington became our nation’s first president.

• His first cabinet consisted of three executive departments
  1. Department of State
  2. Department of War
  3. Treasury Department
Washington’s Cabinet

- John Adams - VP
- Henry Knox (Sec. of War)
- Thomas Jefferson (Sec. of State)
- Edmund Randolph (Attorney General)
- Alexander Hamilton (Sec. of Treasury)
Major Problem of New Gov’t

• MONEY!!

• Need taxes- uh oh!

• Congress agreed to tax whiskey. (excise tax)
Whiskey Rebellion

• a rebellion by farmers in western Pennsylvania who refused to pay for a tax on whiskey.

• They tarred and feathered tax collectors who tried to enforce the law.
Washington’s Response to the Whiskey Rebellion

- saw the rebellion as a threat to the new government’s authority.
- He led 13,000 state militia troops across the mountains to crush the rebels.
- The rebels ended the rebellion rather than face Washington’s large force.
Meanwhile…

• French Revolution is happening….
When Washington left office, he warned against the dangers of passionate loyalty to parties. If fighting between parties was not controlled, it could tear the young nation apart.

Washington’s views came from his observation of the growing hostilities between the Federalists (led by Alexander Hamilton – his Secretary of the Treasury) and the Democratic-Republicans (led by Thomas Jefferson – his Secretary of State).
Alexander Hamilton

• **Founder of the Federalist Party**

• Alexander Hamilton was our nation’s first secretary of the treasury, serving under President Washington.

• He was responsible for improving America’s financial well-being and printing money.
Alexander Hamilton Money
Personal Background

- Hamilton was born in the West Indies. He was charming, able, and ambitious.
- During the Revolutionary War, he was the aide to General Washington.
• Later, he married well and became a delegate to the Constitutional Convention.
Hamilton believed most people were basically selfish and out for themselves.
Ideal Economy

• Hamilton believed the ideal economy was one based on business, manufacturing, and trade.

• He also believed the nation needed a national bank to collect taxes, print money, and make loans to build factories and ships.
Best Form of Government

• Hamilton believed the country should be run by wealthy, educated, and public-spirited men.
View of the Federal Government

- He favored a strong federal (national) government, which is why he was a strong supporter of the Constitution.
Relations with Britain and France

• Hamilton sided with Britain against France. He respected Britain’s power and order, and was shocked by the violence and chaos of the French Revolution.
Thomas Jefferson

- Founder of the Republican Party
- Thomas Jefferson was our nation’s first secretary of state, serving under President Washington.
- He was responsible for improving America’s relations with other countries, including the negotiation of treaties.
Thomas Jefferson Money
Personal Background

- Jefferson was born into a wealthy family that owned a large farm in Virginia. As a young man, he showed his brilliance and curiosity.
• Later, he inherited his family’s land and began a tobacco plantation that used slaves. He wrote the Declaration of Independence.
• Jefferson believed that ordinary, informed people could make good decisions for the country.
Ideal Economy

• Jefferson favored an economy based on agriculture. He was opposed to the national bank that loaned money to businesspeople but not farmers.
Jefferson thought the best government was a democracy, where ordinary Americans chose their leaders.
Jefferson also believed in a small federal (national) government with limited powers, but strong state governments. He believed in the right of states to ignore national laws that they didn’t agree with.
Jefferson favored France over Britain.

Relations with Britain and France

- Jefferson favored France over Britain.
One major issue between Fed and Anti-Feds…

HOW LARGE AND POWERFUL THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT SHOULD BE!!!!
Relations with Britain and France

However, he opposed the tactics of Citizen Genet, who was sent to the United States to persuade the country to join France in its war with Britain. When Genet personally attacked George Washington, Jefferson agreed Genet should be sent back to France.
THE ELECTION OF 1796

John Adams
Federalist

Mainly supported by lawyers, merchants, shipowners, and businesspeople in the North.

Thomas Jefferson
Democratic-Republican

Mainly supported by farmers in the South and the West.
THE ELECTION OF 1796

John Adams
Federalist

Winner

Thomas Jefferson
Democratic-Republican
John Adams’ Presidency

• Following Adams’ election as president, Federalists in Congress passed four controversial laws known as the Alien and Sedition Acts.

• **Alien**: people who have come from other countries and are not yet citizens (immigrants)

• **Sedition**: the crime of encouraging rebellion against the government
The Alien Acts

- Three laws aimed at aliens (noncitizens) were called the Alien Acts.
- The first lengthened the time it took for an immigrant to become a citizen with the right to vote – from 5 to 14 years.
- The other two Alien Acts allowed the president to either jail or deport (kick out of the country) aliens who were suspected of stirring up trouble.
- The laws were never enforced but they frightened a number of French spies and rabble-rousers (troublemakers) into leaving the country.
The Sedition Act

• The Sedition Act made sedition (encouraging rebellion against the government) a crime.

• Sedition included “printing, writing, or speaking in a scandalous or malicious [hateful] way against the government. . . Congress . . . or the President.”

• Alexander Hamilton believed that the law would punish only those who published vicious lies intended to destroy the government, but Jefferson saw it as violating the freedoms of speech and the press.
Federalists’ Views on the Alien Acts

• Federalists believed that the laws were necessary to protect the country from troublemakers.
Federalists’ Views on the Sedition Act

• Federalists believed the Sedition Act would punish those who published lies intended to destroy the government.
Republicans’ Views on the Alien Acts

- Republicans believed that the Alien Acts were an attack upon their party because most immigrants voted Republican.
Republicans’ Views on the Sedition Act

• Republicans believed the Sedition Act was an attack on the rights of free speech and press and intended to prevent them from criticizing the government.
The Virginia and Kentucky Resolutions

- Democratic-Republicans looked to the states to oppose the acts.
- Jefferson and Madison drew up a set of resolutions, or statements, opposing the Alien and Sedition Acts and sent them to the state legislatures for approval.
- Only Virginia and Kentucky adopted the resolutions, so the protest eventually died.
States’ Rights

• The Virginia and Kentucky Resolutions raised the issue of states’ rights.
• The Question: Did states have the right not to honor federal laws that they believed violated the Constitution?
• This issue of states’ rights would be debated for years to come and would later play a role in the American Civil War.
1785-1790: New York

1790-1800: Philadelphia

1800-Present: Washington, D.C.

- In the first years of its existence, our nation’s capital moved from city to city.
- In fall of 1800, the federal government permanently moved to the city of Washington in the District of Columbia.
- Most of the government’s buildings were still under construction at this time.
Abigail Adams, the President’s wife, described the new “President’s House” as a “castle” in which “not one room or chamber is finished.”
THE ELECTION OF 1800

Winner

John Adams
Federalist

Thomas Jefferson
Democratic-Republican
Revolution of 1800

• The election of 1800 was known as the Revolution of 1800 because power had passed from one group (the Federalists) to another (the Republicans) without a single shot being fired.

• This was different than other countries where power changed hands by means of a war or a revolution.

• Thus, the election of 1800 proved that the system of government established by the Constitution was a success.