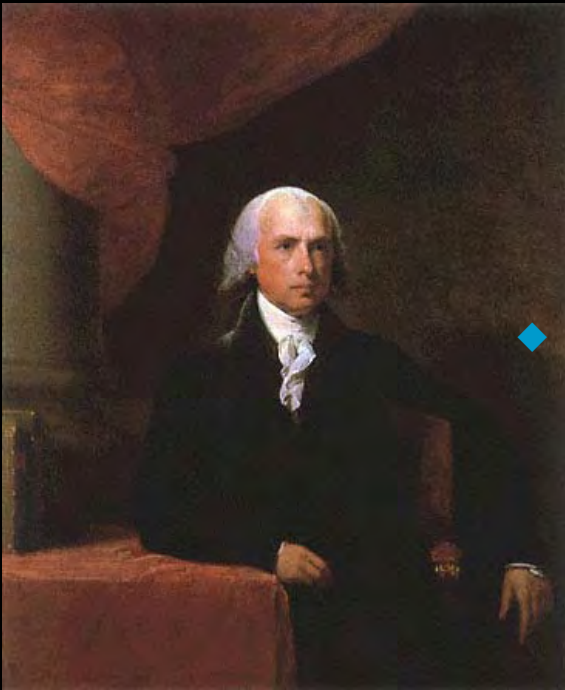


FATHERS OF THEIR COUNTRY: THE FEDERALISTS

HISTORY 1100.3,
NOV. 15-27, 2007

I. THE CRISIS OF THE CONFEDERATION AND THE MOVEMENT FOR A NEW GOVERNMENT



James Madison

- ◆ **A. Catalysts for the Nationalist (Federalist) Movement**
 - 1. Dissatisfaction of younger Revolutionary leaders (such as Alexander Hamilton of NY & James Madison of VA) with weakness of national government, unfitness of state governments, conflicting state trade & economic policies.
 - 2. Economic depression and widespread hardship for common people during 1780s.
 - 3. Elite fears of further revolution caused by conflict between debtors and creditors: Shays' Rebellion, 1786-87.
- ◆ **B. Madison and Hamilton and the Origins of Federalism: "A Revolution in Favor of Government"**
 - Explanation of term "Federalist"
 - 1. Madison saw root of problem in the excessive democracy and Revolutionary zeal they saw in states.
 - 2. Hamilton's goal was more simply the re-creation of a single sovereign authority in the form of a more powerful national government.
 - 3. M & H wanted a more powerful government for different reasons:
 - Madison wanted a unified trade policy that would open foreign markets & western land for American farmers, keep it away from British model.
 - Hamilton wanted to rapidly develop country so it could be become a new empire rivaling Great Britain, which he saw as a model.

II. MUDDYING THE WATERS: THE PHILADELPHIA CONVENTION, MAY-SEPT. 1787



- ◆ A. Make-up and procedures of convention
 - 1. Convention made up of nation's elite (in contrast to state legislatures).
 - 2. Met in private, with no spectators or reporters.
 - 3. Voted by states.
- ◆ B. Nationalist Proposals: Led by James Madison's Virginia Plan.
 - 1. Main elements of Virginia Plan: national representative government with bicameral legislature (both houses apportioned by population), national veto on state laws.
 - 2. Conflicts in the convention: small states vs. large states; people, states or property as the basis of representation; sovereign national government or not.
 - 3. Father of His Country and King of Democracy: Strong executive (the presidency) emerged as element of most plans. Independently elected, with veto power.
 - The patriarchal role of an elective monarch was thinkable because all knew that the trusted George Washington would be the one to fill the office.

II. MUDDYING THE WATERS: THE PHILADELPHIA CONVENTION, MAY-SEPT. 1787 (CONT.)

◆ **D. Great (or Connecticut) Compromise:** broke large state-small state deadlock, split basis of representation (population or states) between two houses.

- 1. Fudged issue of sovereignty (where located, whether national government had it).
- 2. Oh no! Imperium in imperio! Created unique U.S. "federal" system in which functions of government and ultimate responsibilities were divided.
- 3. Also included a North-South compromise, the "3/5 clause," partially counting slaves for purposes of representation and taxation. (Free women & children counted as full people.)

E. Committee of Detail then worked up final draft that enumerated national powers and made other important changes.

- Important nationalist loophole added: power to make any laws "necessary and proper" to execute the enumerated powers.
- States prohibited from engaging in diplomatic relations, issuing money, or laying import duties. National laws "supreme" over state laws.
- No Bill of Rights included, in contrast to state constitutions. Not needed, was the argument, but Federalists really did not want government's hands tied in any significant way.
- Opponents of the Constitution (Antifederalists) forced promise that a Bill of Rights would be added immediately if the Constitution was approved.
 - Fulfilling a promise made (especially to Baptists) during the first congressional elections, Madison created & got passed what now call the Bill of Rights.

◆ **F. Committee of Style** muddied waters further on issues of slavery & sovereignty.

- 1. Slaves or slavery never mentioned by name in the document despite many special protections.
- 2. Preamble of Constitution invoked "We the People" and suggested that a consolidated, sovereign, national republic had been created.

III. ECHOES OF MONARCHY & SEEDS OF DIVISION IN THE FIRST ADMINISTRATION

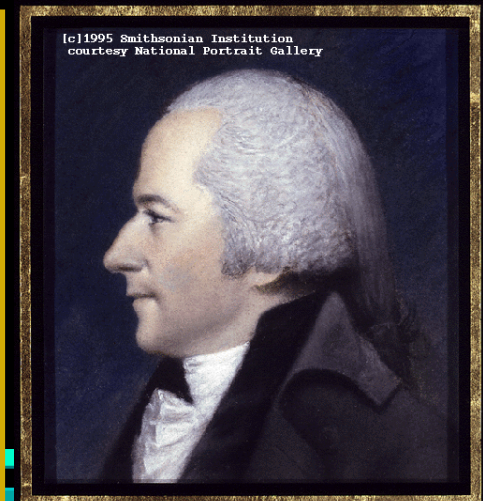
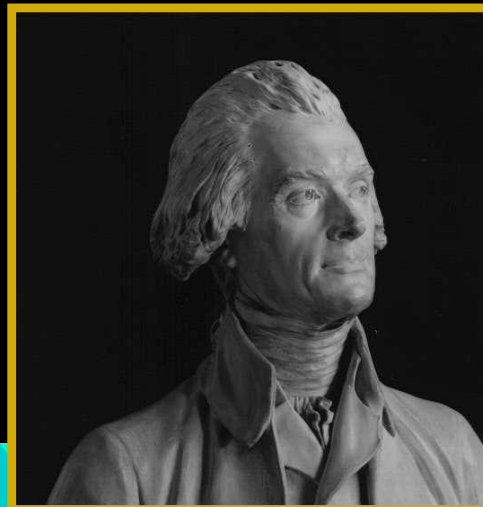
A. Conflicting needs to both reassure people and get them to respect new government.

B. Sometimes intentionally, Washington & his supporters modeled new presidency on the British monarchy

- 1. Washington's "Triumphal Progress" to New York
- 2. Vice President John Adams (Mass.) & the "title debate"
- 3. Social life: coach, "levees," no presidential handshakes
- 4. Birthday celebrations & coinage

C. Division in the First Cabinet

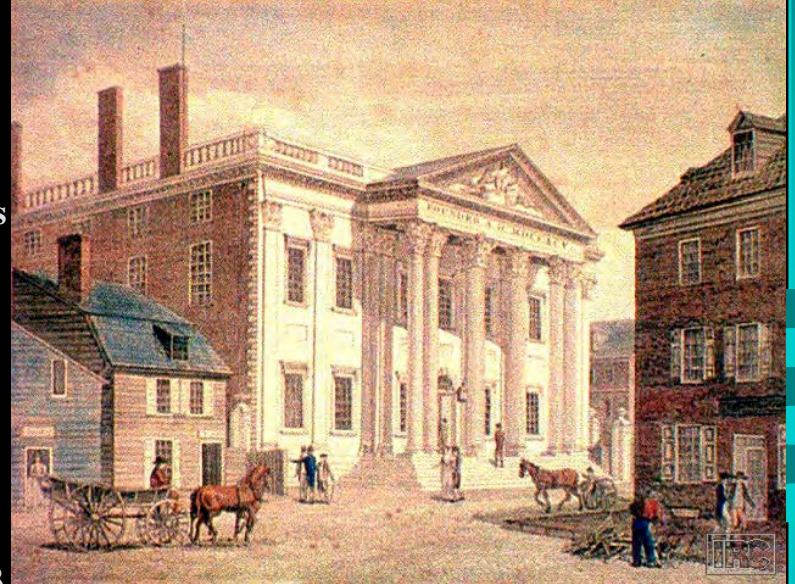
- 1. Intended to unify new nation – no one believed in political parties – but instead laid seeds of party conflict that continues to this day.
- 2. Treasury Secretary Alexander Hamilton, Washington's assistant during the War, acted as prime minister.
- 3. Secretary of State Thomas Jefferson of VA eventually became figurehead of nation and world's first opposition political party, the Democratic-Republicans (today's Democrats).



IV. DESPERATELY SEEKING SOVEREIGNTY: THE FEDERALISTS IN THE 1790S

A. Hamilton's Financial System (1790-91)

- 1. "Funding" of the national debt: regular interest, at face value, to investors who held debt.
- 2. "Assumption" of the states' war debts.
- 3. Bank of the United States (2/91)
 - Profit-making corporation under private control, holding government's \$.
 - TJ-AH debate on the constitutionality of the bank: hinged on the "necessary and proper" clause, involved basic philosophies of government.
 - Did Constitution's text limit government or not? Was this the new liberal republic Americans had fought for, or a return to old-style sovereignty?
- 4. Immediate use of the new taxation power: import duties & the Excise or Whiskey Tax.

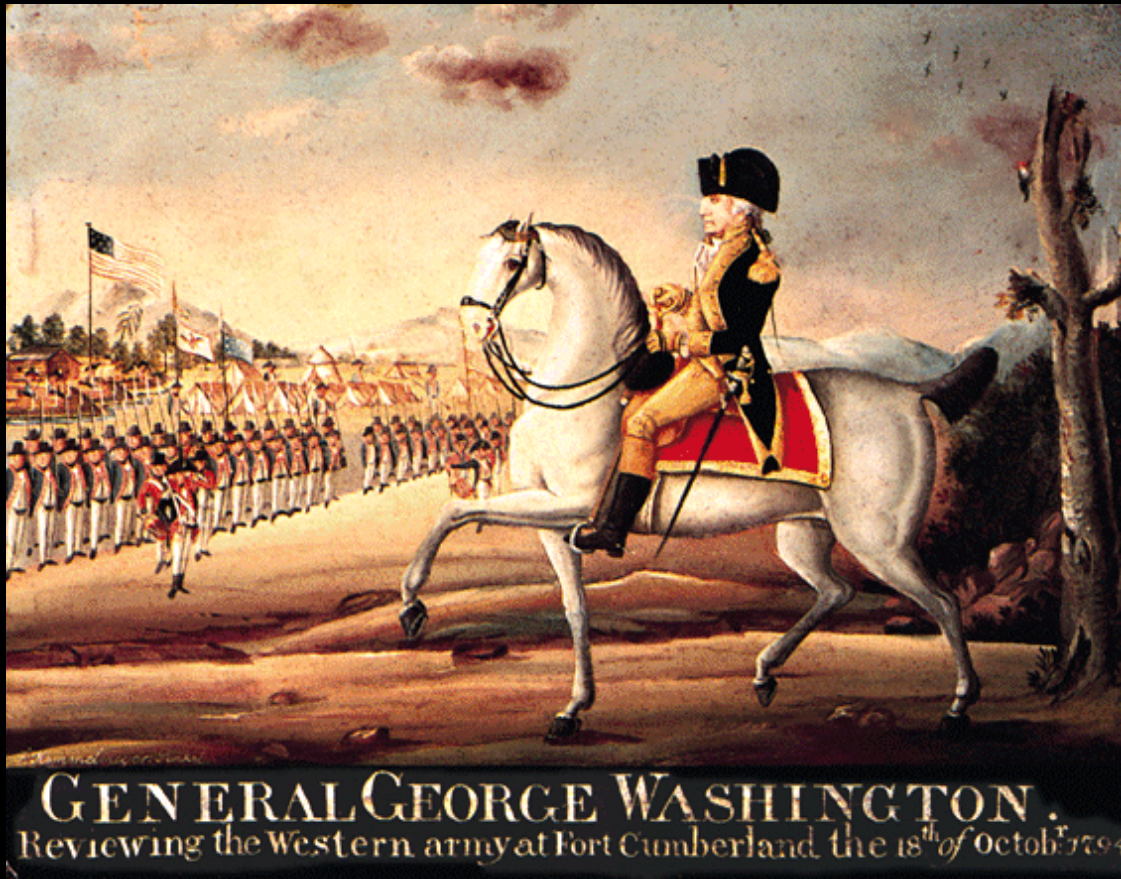


B. Rise of the Opposition

- 1. Democratic-Republican Societies (clubs supporting French Revolution & democracy) popped up when 1st ambassador from French Republic (Genet) arrived in 1793.
- 2. Washington denounced clubs as "self-created" & illegitimate, nearly equating opposition to his policies with treason.
- 3. U.S. abandoned French alliance with Proclamation of Neutrality (1793) & moved closer to Britain w/ Jay Treaty (1795).
- 4. Galvanized by Jay Treaty, opposition morphed into 1st opposition political party.
 - Jefferson put up against John Adams in 1796 presidential election, nearly won with charge that Adams was monarchist.

The Bank of the
United States,
Philadelphia

IV. DESPERATELY SEEKING SOVEREIGNTY: THE FEDERALISTS IN THE 1790S (CONT.)

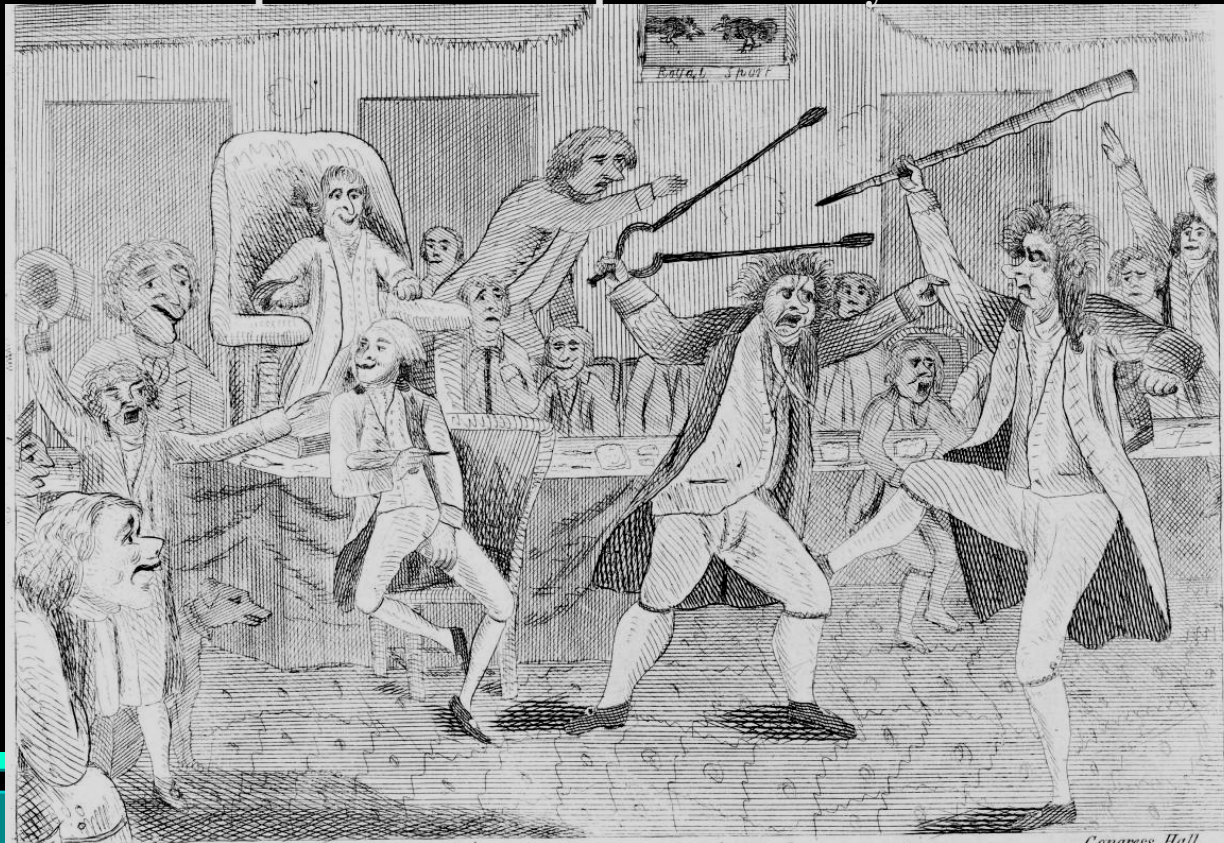


◆ C. Federalist assertions of national sovereignty

- 1. Whiskey Rebellion, 1794: 13,000 troops sent to suppress protests against excise tax in western PA.
- 2. “Quasi-War” with France, 1798-1800: undeclared naval war (with possibility of wider conflict) leading to military build-up and crackdown on domestic opposition.
- 3. Alien and Sedition Acts, 1798: allowed government to easily deport immigrant radicals, made criticism of government a crime, led to arrests of opposition newspaper editors.
 - Federalists charged that Jefferson & Democratic-Republican press were conspiring with the French.
 - Bill of Rights held to be no barrier.

IV. DESPERATELY SEEKING SOVEREIGNTY: THE FEDERALISTS IN THE 1790S (CONT.)

- ◆ C. Federalist assertions of national sovereignty (cont.)
 - 4. Direct or “Window” Tax: first federal income tax, designed to pay for security program.
 - 5. Fries’ Rebellion, 1800: military force used against German farmers who resisted collection of the Direct Tax.
 - 6. Intimidation and violence (sometimes by paramilitary groups) against Republicans. Example: attack on Rep. Matthew Lyon on floor of Congress.



V. THE FALL OF THE FEDERALISTS & THE TRIUMPH OF DEMOCRATIC POLITICS (CONT.)

- ◆ A. Election of 1800 pitted Federalist New England (the “Bible belt” of the 1790s) vs. Republican South & west.
 - Feds saved New England by attacking Jefferson’s religious beliefs, claiming he was a threat to Christianity, morality, & the family.
 - NY and PA as "swing states" that gave Jefferson and Burr the win.
- ◆ B. Jefferson & Republicans won 1800 election, but still distrusted Federalists as monarchists & would-be tyrants conspiring to keep power.
 - Electoral College did not allow for political parties or presidential running mates, creating a tie between Jefferson & Burr that Congress had to settle.
 - Tie allowed Federalists in Congress to delay Jefferson's election, toy with choosing Burr instead, causing first real brush with civil war.
- ◆ C. Jefferson later called his election “The Revolution of 1800”
 - 1st peaceful transfer of power & the beginnings of democracy, parties, & competitive elections as basis of U.S. political system.
 - Song “Jefferson and Liberty” as example of Jeffersonian radicalism and the new democracy-driven, informally rewritten constitution.



JEFFERSON'S RELIGIOUS BELIEFS AS A POLITICAL ISSUE

THE GRAND QUESTION STATED

At the present solemn and momentous epoch, the only question to be asked by every American, laying his hand on his heart is "shall I continue in allegiance to

GOD — AND A RELIGIOUS PRESIDENT;

or impiously declare for

JEFFERSON — AND NO GOD!!"

Philadelphia Gazette of the United States,
September 1800



"JEFFERSON AND LIBERTY"

1. The gloomy night before us flies,
The reign of terror now is o'er;
Its gags, inquisitors, and spies,
Its herds of harpies are no more!

CHORUS

Rejoice, Columbia's sons, rejoice!
To tyrants never bend the knee,
But join with heart, and soul, and voice,
For Jefferson and Liberty!

3. No lordling here, with gorging jaws
Shall wring from industry the food;
Nor fiery bigot's holy laws
Lay waste our fields and streets in blood!

4. Here strangers from a thousand shores
Compelled by tyranny to roam,
Shall find amidst abundant stores,
A nobler and happier home.

5. Here Art shall lift her laurelled head,
Wealth, Industry, and Peace, divine;
And where dark, pathless forests spread,
Rich fields and lofty cities shine.

6. From Europe's wants and woes remote,
A friendly waste of waves between,
Here plenty cheers the humblest cot,
And smiles on every village green.

7. Here free as air, expanded space,
To every soul and sect shall be
That sacred privilege of our race
The worship of the Deity.

8. Let foes to freedom dread the name;
But should they touch the sacred tree,
Twice fifty thousands swords would flame
For Jefferson and liberty.

9. From Georgia to Lake Champlain,
From seas to Mississippi's shore,
Ye sons of freedom loud proclaim
The reign of terror is no more.

THOMAS JEFFERSON AS CONSPIRATOR

