

# THE WASHINGTON PRESIDENCY



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# ELECTION

- 1<sup>st</sup> elections (1789) for Senate + House
- State Legislatures chose “electors”
- Washington/Adams = President/VP (both strong Federalists)
- Washington chose title “Mr. President” + established dignity of office

# BILL OF RIGHTS

- Anti-federalists push for guarantee of personal freedoms + states' rights
- Madison directed toward individual rights rather than power of the states
- Ratified as first 10 amendments
- Broadened based of support
- Finally N.C. + R.I. ratified

# PRECEDENTS

## (SET BY WASHINGTON)

**#1: *First Executive Departments*** (in Articles, but decided Pres. Could dismiss w/o Congressional approval)

 State Dep't. (foreign affairs) = Jefferson

 Treasury (finances) = Hamilton

 War Dep't. (nat'l. defense) = Knox

 Attorney General (lawyer) = Randolph

“Cabinet”

# MORE PRECEDENTS

#2: *Judiciary Act of 1789* (Const. Est. Supreme Court, but left lower courts to Congress)

- Compromise: Set up federal hierarchy  
District → Circuit (appeals) → SC

Must be issue of Constitutionality!

# EVEN MORE PRECEDENTS...

**#3 Treaties:** Constitution = President could make treaties with approval of Congress

Washington found he was ignored in the process, so he set precedent of negotiating the treaty, then sending it to Congress for approval.

# REVENUE & TRADE

## ALEXANDER HAMILTON'S ECONOMIC PLAN

**#1: War Debt:** AH wanted all debt nationalized to est. good credit = 2 types of debt owed citizens

 **Owed by Federal gov't: issued bonds, value dropped when people lost faith, bought by speculators**

 **Owed by State gov't: AH argued Feds should assume/So. Angry, had paid most of debt**

 **Compromise:**

**A. Feds assume debt/everyone taxed**

**B. Capitol moved to Va./Md.**

# More Hamilton...

## #2: National Bank

Depository for federal money

Lend money to gov't. + citizens

Made currency sound

- Debate over whether Constitutional
- Bill passed in 1791
- Chartered for 20 years



# Even More Hamilton...

- **Tariff**
  - **Tariff Act of 1789 put tariffs or duties on certain foreign goods**
  - **1791 AH asked Congress for protective tariff to support Amer. industry**

**And, yes, even more Hamilton...**

- **Excise Tax (on goods made/sold in country)**

**on whiskey to pay interest on nat'l. debt**



**Frontier/backcountry opposed**



**W. Penn. Farmers refused = Whiskey  
Rebellion**



**Oct., 1794, AH urged Washington  
to send 13,000 militia to enforce**

# OPPOSITION TO HAMILTON'S PLAN

**“Constructionists” (or how they interpreted the  
Constitution)**

## Strict

- Narrow interpretation
- “Constitution did not specifically give Congress the right to charter banks”
- Jefferson

## Broad

- Loose interpretation
- “Constitution gave Congress power “to make all laws necessary & proper”
- Hamilton

# POLITICAL PARTIES

(BY END OF WASHINGTON'S 1ST TERM)

## Federalists



Broad Constructionists



Strong nat'l. gov't.



Elitists

## Democratic-Republicans



Strict Constructionists



States Rights



“Demos”

WASHINGTON REMAINED ABOVE, RE-ELECTED IN  
1792

# FOREIGN AFFAIRS

- **French Revolution (1789)**



**Violent by 1792 = sparked debate**

- » **Federalists: Pro-British, vs. Fr. Rev.**
- » **Republicans: Pro-French, vs. Br. Trade policies**



**Edward Genet (Fr. Amb.) Tried to entice US into war with Great Britain**



**Proclamation of Neutrality (April, 1793)**



**Touched off divisive politics:**



**Federalists seen as party of the “rich”**



**Republicans seen as party of the “common man”**

# FOREIGN AFFAIRS, AGAIN...

- Treaty of Grenville (1795)  
12 tribes ceded Ohio Valley to U.S.  
government for \$9500 per year



# Again, Foreign Affairs...

- **Jay's Treaty (1794) British refused to acknowledge Amer. Neutrality**
  - Seized U.S. ships going to France
  - “Impressed” Amer. Into Br. Navy
  - John Jay (SC Justice) negotiated:
    - **British:** 1. Withdraw from forts in NW Territory  
2. Grant limited trade rights with West Indies  
3. Pay for ships seized
    - **U.S.:** 1. Pay debts owed Br. Citizens  
2. Help survey/establish N.E. Canadian border
- Created divisiveness:**
  - 1. Wanted unlimited West Indian trade
  - 2. Didn't want to repay Br. debt

# YOU GUESSED IT, MORE FOREIGN POLICY..

- Pinkney's Treaty (1795) with Spain (very popular)
- Thomas Pinkney (Minister to Great Britain)
  1. Accepted 31<sup>st</sup> parallel as northern border of Florida
  2. Granted Amer. Farmers free transit through New Orleans
  3. Stopped Indians raids into Georgia



# WASHINGTON'S FAREWELL SPEECH

- Resigned from politics
- Urged neutrality
- Warned vs. foreign alliances
- Denounced political partisanship, especially “regional” differences



RELYING ON ITS KINDNESS IN THIS AS IN OTHER THINGS, AND ACTUATED BY THAT FERVENT LOVE TOWARDS IT, WHICH IS SO NATURAL TO A MAN, WHO VIEWS IT IN THE NATIVE SOIL OF HIMSELF AND HIS PROGENITORS FOR SEVERAL GENERATIONS; I ANTICIPATE WITH PLEASING EXPECTATION THAT RETREAT, IN WHICH I PROMISE MYSELF TO REALIZE, WITHOUT ALLOY, THE SWEET ENJOYMENT OF PARTAKING, IN THE MIDST OF MY FELLOW-CITIZENS, THE BENIGN INFLUENCE OF GOOD LAWS UNDER A FREE GOVERNMENT, THE EVER FAVORITE OBJECT OF MY HEART, AND THE HAPPY REWARD, AS I TRUST, OF OUR MUTUAL CARES, LABORS, AND DANGERS.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "G. Washington". The signature is written in black ink on a white rectangular background.