

6-4 – John Adam’s Presidency- Pages 212-215

Essential Question: *In what ways did the development of political parties in the United States contribute to differing ideas about the role of the federal government?*

Main Idea 1:

The rise of political parties created competition in the election of 1796.

- Political **parties** began to **form** in the 1790s.
- ★ **Alexander Hamilton** helped found the **Federalist** Party, which supported a strong **federal** government and sought to **limit** state government **power**.
- ★ The **presidential** election of **1796** differed from prior American **elections** because there were **multiple** candidates.
 - Thomas Jefferson and **James Madison** founded the Democratic-**Republican** Party, which wanted to **limit** the **power** of the **federal** government.
- ★ The **Federalist** John Adams **defeated** the Democratic-Republican candidate, **Thomas Jefferson**, in the **election** of 1796.
- ★ Adams became **president**, and Jefferson, the **presidential** candidate who came in **second**, became **vice president**.



President John Adams

- He had the **hard** task of **following** George Washington as **president**.
- Adams was a leading **patriot** during the **Revolutionary War** and was later a foreign **diplomat**.
- He lacked Washington’s **dignity** but was **respected** for his hard work, **honesty**, and **intelligence**.

Main Idea 2:

The XYZ affair caused problems for President John Adams.

- An early goal of Adams was to **improve** relations with **France**
- U.S. **diplomats** were sent to **France**.
- The **French** foreign minister, **Talleyrand**, would not meet them.
- ★ Three **French** agents secretly **demand**ed a **bribe** before they would discuss a **treaty** with the Americans.
- The so-called **XYZ Affair** outraged Americans and led to a call for **war** with **France**. They would pay “**millions** for defense, but not **one cent** for **tribute**.”



Preparing for War and Peace

Preparations for War

- **Adams** asked **Congress** to expand the **navy** to more than **30** ships.
- He also asked **Congress** to approve a **peacetime** army.

Name _____ Date _____ Period _____

- However, **Adams** did not want war with **France**.

Peace Efforts

- Federalists were **stunned** by Adams's decision not to go to **war**.
- **American** and **French** ships began **fighting** in the Caribbean.
- The United States and **France** eventually signed a **treaty**.

Main Idea 3:

Controversy broke out over the Alien and Sedition Acts.

Alien and Sedition Acts

- The **Federalists** believed that Democratic-Republican **criticism** of Federalist **policies** was **disloyal** and feared that **aliens** living in the United States would **sympathize** with the **French** during a war.
- As a result, a Federalist-controlled **Congress** passed four **laws**, known collectively as the **Alien and Sedition Acts**.
- While the United States engaged in **naval** hostilities with Revolutionary **France**, known as the **Quasi-War**, Alexander Hamilton and congressional **Federalists** took advantage of the public's **wartime** fears and **drafted** and **passed** the Alien and Sedition Acts, **without** first **consulting** President John Adams.
- The Sedition Act forbade anyone from **publishing** or **voicing** criticism of federal **government**.
- ★ Supported by the **Federalists** as a way to **protect** the country from **Republican** critics.
- Jefferson and **Madison** viewed the acts as a **misuse** of government **power**.
- ★ Republicans' main **criticism** of the Alien and Sedition Acts was that they gave too much **power** to the **national** government and **interfered** with **state** government.
- Writing in June 1798 in the *Gazette of the United States*, Alexander Hamilton called the Jeffersonians "more **Frenchmen** than **Americans**" and claimed that they were prepared "to immolate (destroy) the **independence** and welfare of their **country** at the shrine of **France**."

Kentucky and Virginia Resolutions

- ★ **Jefferson** and **Madison** wrote **resolutions** passed by Kentucky and the Virginia legislatures.
- ★ The **documents** argued that the Alien and Sedition Acts were **unconstitutional**.
- They **supported** the idea that states could **challenge** the **federal** government.

