

Major Events of John Adams Presidency

- Conflict with France
- XYZ Affair
- Split in the Federalist Party
- Alien and Sedition Acts
- States Rights
- Election of 1800



Federalist

“It's simply a matter of doing what you do best and not worrying about what the other fellow is going to do.” – John Adams

Conflict with France



- ❑ As soon as Adams took office, he faced the conflict with France.
- ❑ The French did not like Jay's Treaty and began to seize American ships in the West Indies just like the British had done.
- ❑ To avoid war, Adams sent diplomats to France.



XYZ Affair

- ❑ American diplomats were sent to France.
- ❑ XYZ Affair-French attempt to make the United States pay money before discussing French seizure of neutral American ships.
 - ❑ Adams told Congress about the proposal but did not name the agents, instead he called them X,Y, and Z.
- ❑ After this, the people were outraged and demanded war with France but Adams refused and wanted to keep the U.S. out of foreign affairs.
 - ❑ As a result he built frigates – fast-sailing ships with many guns- to convince France to stop attacking.

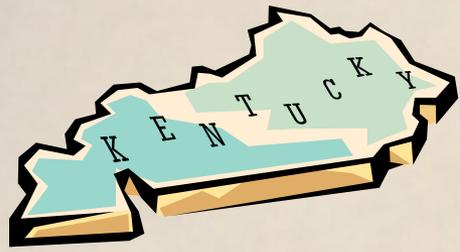
Federalist Split

- Federalists, led by Hamilton, criticized Adams because they wanted a war.
 - This would weaken the Republicans, who supported France.
 - Plus, a war would lead to a build up of the military which would *increase federal power* and was a key goal of the Federalists.
- Adams resisted pressure for war and instead sent diplomats.
 - The diplomats met the new leader, Napoleon Bonaparte, who wanted to wage war in Europe.
 - He wanted nothing to do with a war with the United States and agreed to stop seizing American ships.



Alien and Sedition Acts

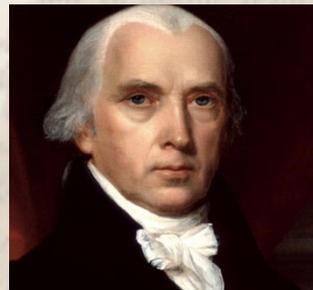
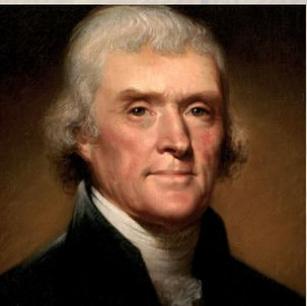
- ❑ Passed in 1798 – domestic policies
- ❑ Alien Act – the President could expel any alien, or foreigner, thought to be dangerous to the country.
- ❑ Naturalization Act: made it harder for immigrants to become citizens (wait 14 years).
- ❑ Sedition Act – citizens could be fined or jailed if they criticized the government or its officials.
- ❑ Republicans protested both of these acts.



States Rights



- Jefferson opposed the Alien and Sedition Acts.
- He urged states to take action against the acts by nullifying (canceling) the law passed by the federal government.
- Kentucky and Virginia Resolution – claimed each state has a right to judge whether or not a law is constitutional.



Election of 1800

- Republicans nominated Thomas Jefferson and Aaron Burr
- Federalists nominated John Adams
- Republicans won the popular vote but Jefferson and Burr tied for the electoral college
 - The House of Representatives made the final vote and chose Jefferson as president
 - It also set up the 12th Amendment – the House would determine the presidency if there was no majority of electoral votes
- Declined the power of Federalists

