**Alien and Sedition Debate on Friday October 9th**

**We will be having a debate on the following question:**

*Are the Alien and Sedition Acts Necessary to protect the Republic or are they an unacceptable violation of constitutional rights?*

You should understand the following:

* What was the Quasi-War with France?
* What was the XYZ affair?
* What were the Alien and Sedition Acts?
* What was the principle of nullification and how did it relate to the Virginia and Kentucky Resolutions?

**Assessment:** Students will be assessed on the following (50 points)

* 20 points – Your ability to accomplish your individual role (I will collect notes and assess these individually).
* 30-points your teams ability to do the following:
  + Opening speech 3 minutes long but no more then 5 and clearly lays out your party’s views on the Alien and Sedition Acts
  + Your teams ability to respond to questions created by your team and the opponents
  + Closing speech is 1-3 minutes long and clearly recaps your party’s views on the Alien and Sedition Acts

**Please read the following descriptions and assign roles. I will need to have a list of who is responsible for what.**

**Campaign Manager**

The role of the Campaign Manager is all-encompassing. It is your job to ensure that all of the other jobs are being accomplished in a timely manner. You will also want to proofread all speeches and make sure that they are on topic. It is also your responsibility to practice the opening/closing speeches with your candidate and quiz him/her on the questions that are likely to be asked.

**Opening Speaker (Federalist or Anti-Federalist)**

It is your job first and foremost to make sure you know you and your party’s positions on the major issues. Be sure to rehearse both your opening speech, and familiarize yourself with the questions that your team is developing. It may be helpful to also understand your opponent’s beliefs so you can challenge him/her during questioning.

**Closing Speaker (Federalist or Anti-Federalist)**

It is your job first and foremost to make sure you know you and your party’s positions on the major issues. Be sure to rehearse both your closing speech, and familiarize yourself with the questions that your team is developing. It may be helpful to also understand your opponent’s beliefs so you can challenge him /her during questioning.

**Speechwriter(s)**

Your job is to write the opening speech. This speech should be approximately three minutes in length.

If your team has more than one speechwriter, the second speechwriter will write a closing speech.

**Question Writers and research**

After reading the documents for your candidate, your job is to come up with ten questions that you would like either your team or your opponent to answer.

**Background information (all group members read)**

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| **The Birth of Political Parties** |
| Digital History ID 2974 | |

The framers of the Constitution had not prepared their plan of government with political parties in mind. They hoped that the "better sort of citizens" would debate key issues and reach a harmonious consensus regarding how best to legislate for the nation's future. Thomas Jefferson reflected widespread sentiments when he declared in 1789, "If I could not go to heaven but with a party, I would not go there at all."

Yet despite a belief that parties were evil and posed a threat to enlightened government, the nation's first political parties emerged in the mid-1790s. Several factors contributed to the birth of parties.

The Federalists, under the leadership of George Washington, John Adams, and Alexander Hamilton, feared that their opponents wanted to destroy the Union, subvert morality and property rights, and ally the United States with revolutionary France.

The Republicans, under the leadership of Thomas Jefferson, feared that the Federalists were trying to establish a corrupt monarchical society, like the one that existed in Britain, with a standing army, high taxes, and government-subsidized monopolies.

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| **Years of Crisis** |
| Digital History ID 2975 | |

In 1793 and 1794 a series of crises threatened to destroy the new national government. The crises were all related to hostilities.

* France tried to entangle America in its war with England;
* Armed rebellion erupted in western Pennsylvania;
* Indians in Ohio threatened American expansion; and
* War with Britain appeared imminent.

In April 1793, a French minister, Edmond Charles Genet, arrived in the United States and tried to persuade American citizens to join in revolutionary France's "war of all peoples against all kings." Genet passed out letters authorizing Americans to attack British commercial vessels. Washington regarded these activities as clear violations of U.S. neutrality, and demanded that France recall its hot headed minister. Fearful that he would be executed if he returned to France, Genet requested and was granted political asylum.

The Genet affair intensified party divisions. From Vermont to South Carolina, supporters of the French Revolution organized Democratic-Republican clubs. Hamilton suspected that these societies really existed to stir up grass-roots opposition to the Washington administration.

Political polarization was further intensified by the outbreak of popular protests in western Pennsylvania against Hamilton's financial program. To help pay off the nation's debt, Congress passed a tax on whiskey. On the frontier, the only practical way to transport and sell surplus corn was to distill it into whiskey. Frontier farmers regarded a tax on whiskey in the same way as American colonists had regarded Britain's stamp tax.

By 1794, western Pennsylvanians had had enough. Some 7,000 frontiersmen marched on Pittsburgh to stop collection of the tax. Determined to set a precedent for the federal government's authority, Washington gathered an army of 15,000 militamen to disperse the rebels. In the face of this overwhelming force, the uprising collapsed. The new government had proved that it would enforce laws enacted by Congress.

Thomas Jefferson took a very different view of the "Whiskey Rebellion." He believed that the government had used the army to stifle legitimate opposition to unfair government policies.

The end of the American Revolution unleashed a rush of white settlers into frontier Georgia, Kentucky, Tennessee, Ohio, and western New York. Hundreds died as Indians resisted the influx of whites onto their lands. To open the Ohio country to white settlement, President Washington dispatched three armies. Twice, a confederacy of eight tribes led by Little Turtle, chief of the Miamis, defeated American forces. But in 1794, a third army defeated the Indian alliance at the Battle of Fallen Timbers in northwestern Ohio. Under the Treaty of Greenville (1795), Native Americans ceded much of the present state of Ohio in return for cash and a promise that the federal government would treat the Indian nations fairly in land dealings.

The year 1794 brought a crisis in America's relations with Britain. For a decade, Britain had refused to evacuate forts in the Northwest Territory. Control of those forts allowed the British to monopolize the fur trade. Frontier settlers believed that British officials sold firearms to the Indians and incited uprisings against white settlers. War appeared imminent when British warships stopped 300 American ships carrying food supplies to France and to France's overseas possessions and forced sailors suspected of deserting from British ships into the British navy.

To end the crisis, President Washington sent Chief Justice John Jay to London to negotiate a settlement with the British. Britain agreed to evacuate its forts on American soil and to cease harassing American shipping (provided the ships did not carry supplies to Britain's enemies). Britain also agreed to pay damages for the ships it had seized and to permit the United States to trade with India and carry on restricted trade with the British West Indies. But Jay failed to win compensation for slaves carried off by the British army during the Revolution.

The Jeffersonians denounced the treaty as a give-away to northern shipping interests. Southern slaveowners were especially angry because they received no compensation for the slaves who had fled to the British during the Revolution. In Boston, graffiti appeared on a wall: "Damn John Jay! Damn everyone who won't damn John Jay!! Damn everyone that won't put lights in his windows and sit up all night damning John Jay!!!"

President Washington was now in a position to retire gracefully. He had pushed the British out of the western forts, opened the Ohio country to white settlement, and avoided war with Britain. In a Farewell Address, published in a Philadelphia newspaper in 1796, Washington warned his countrymen against the growth of partisan divisions. He also called on the country to avoid "permanent alliance with any portion of the foreign world." It would not be until after World War II that the country would establish peacetime alliances with foreign nations.

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| **The Presidency of John Adams** |  |  |
| Digital History ID 2977 | | |

The new president was a 61 year-old Harvard-educated lawyer who had been an early leader in the struggle for independence. Short, bald, overweight, and vain, he was known, behind his back, as "His Rotundity."

Adams was the first president to live in what would later be called the White House. Just 6 of the structure's 30 rooms were plastered. The White House's main staircases were not installed for another four years. The mansion's grounds were cluttered with workers' shanties, privies, and stagnant pools of water. The president's wife, Abigail, hung laundry to dry in the East Room. The city of Washington consisted of a brewery, a half-finished hotel, an abandoned canal, an empty warehouse and wharf, and 372 dwellings, "most of them small miserable huts." Cows and hogs ran freely in the capital's streets, and snakes frequented the city's many bogs and marshes. The entire population consisted of 500 families and some 300 members of government.

During Adams' presidency, the United States faced its most serious international crisis yet: an undeclared naval war with France. In the Jay Treaty, France perceived an American tilt toward Britain, especially in a provision permitting the British to seize French goods from American ships in exchange for financial compensation. France retaliated by capturing hundreds of vessels flying the United States flag.

Adams sent a negotiating team to France to settle the dispute. The French foreign minister continually postponed official negotiations. Meanwhile, three French emissaries (known later simply as X, Y, and Z) demanded that the Americans pay a bribe of $250,000 and provide a $10 million loan. The Americans refused to pay anything.

Word of the "XYZ affair" aroused a popular demand for war. The popular slogan was "millions for defense, but not one cent for tribute." The Federalist-controlled Congress prepared for war by authorizing a 20,000 man army and calling George Washington out of retirement as commander in chief. During the winter of 1798, an undeclared naval war took place between France and the United States.

In the midst of the crisis, the Federalist dominated Congress passed the notorious Alien and Sedition Acts, which were designed to suppress public criticism of the government. These laws:

* lengthened the period necessary before immigrants could become citizens from 5 to 14 years;
* gave the president the power to imprison or deport any foreigner believed to be dangerous to the United States; and
* made it a crime to attack the government with "false, scandalous, or malicious" statements or writings.

These acts contributed to Thomas Jefferson's election as president in 1800 and gave the Federalist party a reputation for political repression. Federalist prosecutors used the Sedition Act to convict ten editors and printers. The most notorious use of the law to suppress dissent involved Luther Baldwin, who was arrested in a Newark, N.J. tavern. While cannons roared to celebrate a presidential visit to the city, Baldwin was overheard saying "that he did not care if they fired through [the president's] arse." For his drunken remark, Baldwin was imprisoned for two months and fined.

Republicans accused the Federalists of violating fundamental liberties. The state legislatures of Kentucky and Virginia adopted resolutions written by Thomas Jefferson and James Madison denouncing the Alien and Sedition Acts as an infringement on freedom of expression. The Virginia and Kentucky Resolutions advanced the idea that the states had a right to declare federal laws null and void, and helped to establish the theory of states' rights.

Adams succeeded in averting full-scale war with France, but at the cost of a second term as president. Hamilton vowed to destroy Adams: "If we must have an enemy at the head of government, let it be one whom we can oppose, and for whom we are not responsible."