

Topic 4.2

The Rise of Political Parties and the Era of Jefferson

You Will Learn To:

- Explain the causes and effects of policy debates in the early republic.

The Rise of Political Parties

In the 1790s, political disagreements led to the formation of two political parties: Federalists and Democratic-Republicans. The Federalist Party wanted a strong central government, arguing for implied powers that gave the federal government the authority to govern effectively. Additionally, Federalists were market-oriented and desired strong economic ties with Great Britain.

Federalists (Hamiltonians)	Democratic-Republicans (Jeffersonians)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strong central government • Loose view of Constitution • Pro-British • Market economy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Weak central government • Strict view of Constitution • Pro-French • Agrarian economy

In contrast, Democratic-Republicans envisioned a republic of independent small farmers, with a limited national government to protect people's rights. Democratic-Republicans also supported France in its conflict with England. In this topic, we'll see how these political parties continued to debate issues during the early 19th century.

Revolution of 1800

By 1800, unpopular Federalist policies such as the Alien and Sedition Act had lessened the popularity of the Federalist Party. The Election of 1800 was a complete victory for the Democratic-Republicans, with their two candidates receiving the same number of electoral votes. As per the Constitution, the House of Representatives voted to break the tie: Thomas Jefferson became president, and Aaron Burr became vice president. In 1801, a peaceful transfer of power between the parties occurred—remarkable among world governments at the time.

The Era of Jefferson

Thomas Jefferson's genius was philosophical. A student of the Enlightenment and Classical history, Jefferson had a defined vision of what republicanism should be in the early republic. The republic, according to Jefferson, must be virtuous to survive.

For Jefferson, the republic's virtue came from educated landowners who could make informed, unbiased political decisions. Jefferson, a Virginia planter, wanted an agrarian (farming) republic because he believed cities to be a corrupting influence on the republic. To create this virtuous agrarian republic, Jefferson favored the nation's western expansion.



As president, Jefferson had to make compromises to fulfill his republican vision of limited government while effectively governing the nation. To govern properly, Jefferson kept many Federalist policies. Jefferson appeased his Democratic-Republicans by limiting government through military reductions and cutting federal jobs. Jefferson also repealed many excise taxes on goods, like the one that led to the Whiskey Rebellion, while lowering the national debt. To appease Federalists, Jefferson maintained the national bank and some excise taxes, as per Hamilton's fiscal plan.

The National Political Debates

National politics during the early 19th century was multifaceted. Political debates concerned foreign policy, tariffs, and the powers of the federal government.

Foreign Policy

During the early 19th century, France and England were engaged in a bitter conflict, most of it playing out on the high seas. In the US, the political parties were divided on foreign policy toward France and Britain.

Federalists saw Great Britain as a key economic partner and, therefore, favored US neutrality. In contrast, Democratic-Republicans distrusted Britain. This distrust stemmed from the practice of impressment, in which American sailors were captured and forced to serve in the British Navy.

Democratic-Republicans also did not want to become involved in a European war, yet they had more sympathy for France, which had aided the US in the War for Independence. Jefferson, in particular, valued the ideological similarities between the US and French republics.

Protective Tariffs

Tariffs were the central way the federal government raised revenue. However, the tariffs enacted during the early 19th century were protective tariffs designed to help grow US manufacturing by reducing the competition with European imports. These protective tariffs were part of a larger legislative plan to economically develop the US, known as the "American System".

However, protective tariffs negatively impacted Southern farmers and raised the cost of living in the region. Therefore, the Southern states resisted the tariffs because of the impact on the region, and northern states favored them. Although the tariffs were designed to build the US economy, the debates focused on regional interests.

Federal Power

In the early 19th century, the most contentious issue was expanding federal power. Much of this conflict stemmed from challenges to the constitutionality of tariffs and other elements of the American System.

While politicians debated those issues, the Supreme Court was putting into practice the Federalists' vision of a strong and dynamic federal government.

The Marshall Court (1801-1835)



The Marshall Court (1801–1835)

A Federalist appointee, Supreme Court Chief Justice John Marshall used his influence to expand federal power.

The first Supreme Court justices were highly influential in defining the powers of the federal government. Over three decades, the decisions and opinions of Chief Justice John Marshall shaped the US political system. Particularly, the Marshall Court expanded federal power in many ways, such as

- establishing judicial review;
- upholding the doctrine of implied powers; and
- upholding the Supremacy Clause.

***Marbury v. Madison* (1803)**

Marbury v. Madison (1803) stemmed from a challenge to President John Adams' "midnight judges." In 1800, Adams attempted to fill judicial vacancies by appointing Federalist judges to federal courts in the last hours of his administration.

Incoming president Thomas Jefferson's secretary of state, James Madison, blocked Adams' appointee, William Marbury, from assuming his post. In response, Marbury sued. The Court unanimously ruled that the Judiciary Act (1789) compelled the Jefferson administration to give Marbury the post.

However, in the same decision, Chief Justice John Marshall also ruled that the part of the Judiciary Act that ensured Madison's post was unconstitutional, which meant Madison would not receive his post. In the Court's unanimous decision, Marshall wrote that laws that violate the Constitution are void.

The significance of the *Marbury* decision is the establishment of judicial review, which allows the Supreme Court to rule on the constitutionality of law. With this, the Supreme Court became an important check on the powers of the executive and legislative branches of government.

***McCulloch v. Maryland* (1819)**

In *McCulloch v. Maryland* (1819), the Marshall Court ruled that the state of Maryland did not have the authority to tax the national bank located in Maryland. The state of Maryland had argued that because the federal government lacked the authority to charter the national bank, Maryland had the right to weaken the bank through taxes.

In the decision, the Marshall Court upheld Alexander Hamilton's doctrine of implied powers. The Court ruled that the Constitution's Necessary and Proper Clause gave Congress the authority to charter a national bank and that, as a federal institution, the bank could not be taxed by states.

The Louisiana Purchase

In 1801, Spain quietly handed France control over much of the interior of North America. The exchange returned the Lower Mississippi Valley and the port of New Orleans to French control. Shortly after, President Jefferson sent James Monroe to negotiate with France for trading rights on the Mississippi River and in New Orleans.



Louisiana purchase

Negotiations began slowly because, in 1801, French leader Napoleon still had ambitions in North America. By 1803, however, the Haitian Revolution dampened French resolve in the Western Hemisphere.

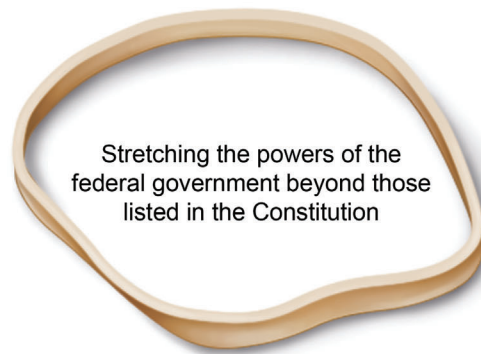
Napoleon needed money to finance his European wars, so he made Madison an offer: France would sell Louisiana to the US for roughly \$15 million. Surprised by France's offer, which gave the US what it wanted plus more, Madison accepted before consulting with President Jefferson. When news arrived in the US weeks later, it presented a challenge for the ideologically oriented president.

President Jefferson's Crisis

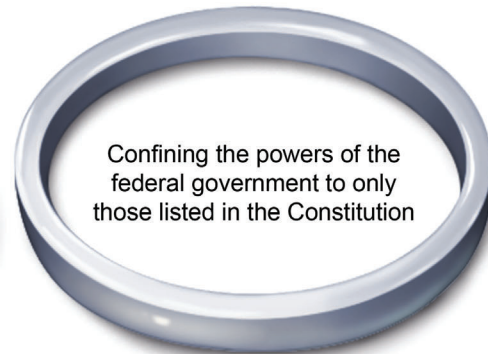
For President Jefferson, the Louisiana Purchase presented an ideological crisis. The Democratic-Republicans argued that the federal government only has powers expressed in the Constitution. In other words, Jefferson and his party were committed to a strict construction of the Constitution.

Interpretation of the Constitution

Loose construction



Strict construction



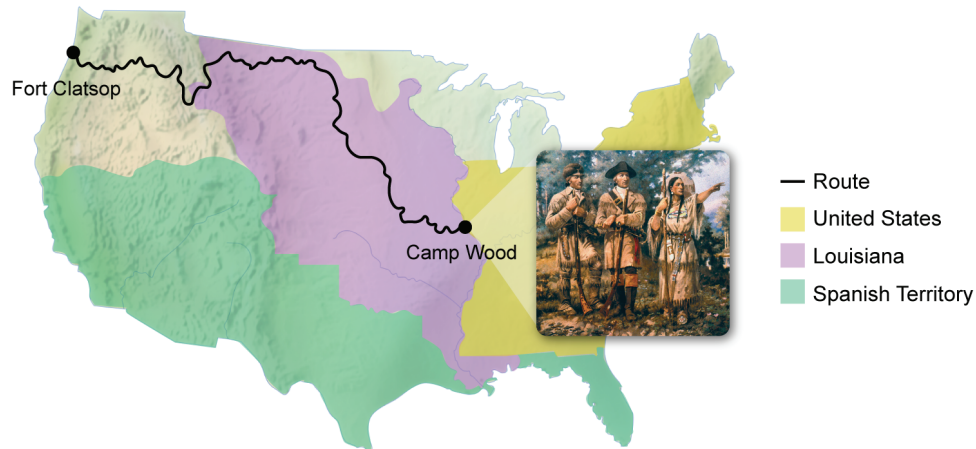
In the case of the Louisiana Purchase, the Constitution did not specifically state that the president could purchase territory. Instead, the power was implied by the president's power to conduct foreign policy and negotiate treaties. The Democratic-Republicans opposed the idea of implied powers. President Jefferson would have to back out of the favorable Louisiana Purchase to uphold his principles.

Despite criticisms from both parties, Jefferson followed through with the deal because it doubled the size of the republic. For President Jefferson, the new land would ensure his vision of an agrarian republic and offset the corrupting influence of cities.

The Lewis and Clark Expedition (1804–1806)

In 1804, Meriwether Lewis and William Clark led a federally commissioned expedition across the new territory. The Lewis and Clark Expedition left St. Louis and crossed the Great Plains and the Rocky Mountains. In 1806, the expedition crossed into Oregon Country and reached the Pacific Ocean.

Lewis and Clark Expedition (1804–1806)



Lewis and Clark's success was made possible by their Native guide, Sacajawea, who saved the expedition on multiple occasions. Additionally, Sacajawea served as a translator and diplomat as the expedition encountered nations of Plains Indians, such as the Sioux. The expedition brought back geographic, cultural, and scientific knowledge that helped the US gain some control of its new territory.

Things to Remember

- With the Election of 1800, power was transferred peaceably between the two parties.
- Early 19th-century national political debates concerned foreign policy, tariffs, and the powers of the federal government.
- The Marshall Court (1801–1835) expanded federal power and upheld the Supremacy Clause and implemented judicial review
- President Thomas Jefferson's administration purchased Louisiana from France, doubling the size of the US.
- Jefferson opposed the idea of implied powers, yet as president, he used the implied power of the federal government to purchase the Louisiana Territory.
- Between 1804 and 1806, the Lewis and Clark Expedition explored the newly acquired Louisiana Territory, bringing back geographic, cultural, and scientific knowledge that helped the US gain some control of its new territory.

Key Terms and Developments

Election of 1800

Lewis and Clark Expedition

Louisiana Purchase

Marbury v. Madison

McCulloch v. Maryland

Sacajawea

4.2 Check for Understanding

1. **In the context of the conflict between France and Great Britain, in the US, the _____ wanted to maintain strong economic ties with Great Britain and the _____ favored supporting France.**
 - A. Democratic-Republicans, Whigs
 - B. Federalists, Democratic-Republicans
 - C. National Democrats, Federalists
 - D. Federalists, Whigs
2. **Which of the following statements most accurately describes how *Marbury v. Madison* (1803) expanded federal power?**
 - A. It established judicial review
 - B. It upheld the Necessary and Proper Clause
 - C. It allowed for the Louisiana Purchase
 - D. It chartered the national bank
3. **Which of the following statements accurately describes the success of the Lewis and Clark expedition?**
 - A. It located gold and silver deposits in the western parts of the new territory
 - B. The information gathered from the expedition convinced President Jefferson to make the Louisiana Purchase
 - C. It identified the most fertile regions in the Lower Mississippi Valley
 - D. The knowledge gained from the expedition helped increase some control over the Louisiana Purchase