

5: THE EARLY REPUBLIC

ESSENTIAL TERMS



KEY CONCEPTS

Bonds: Essentially an IOU sold by the government. Essentially they are loans people make to the government with a promise of repayment with interest.

Tariffs: Taxes collected on imported goods.

Protectionism: Government policies meant to promote domestic business, either with direct help (subsidies) or by making imports more expensive (tariffs).

Strict Interpretation: A way of reading the Constitution that results in a belief that the government can only do with is expressly written.

Loose Interpretation: A way of reading the Constitution that leads to a belief that the Constitution outlines, but does not express every possible power the government has.

Political Party: A group of people who work together to affect public policy and support candidates for public office.

Judicial Review: The principle that the Supreme Court can rule acts of congress or presidential decision in violation of the Constitution.

Federal Supremacy: The principle that the federal government has power over the states. States cannot ignore or overturn federal law.



PEOPLE AND GROUPS

Alexander Hamilton: First Secretary of the Treasury. He was a Federalist, one of the authors of the Federalist Papers during the debate over ratification of the Constitution. His financial plans included assuming state debts, creating a national bank, and promoting manufacturing. He was killed in a duel with Aaron Burr.

Federalist Party: One of the first two political parties. They supported the Constitution, strong central government, Hamilton's financial plans, and favored Britain over France. Washington and Adams were the only president's from this party.

Democratic-Republican Party: One of the first two political parties. They were the successors to the Anti-Federalists, favored state power fearing tyrannical power concentrated in the federal government. Jefferson and Madison were their leaders.

John Marshall: Third Chief Justice of the Supreme Court. He was critical in the establishment of the court as a co-equal branch of government. He wrote the Marbury v. Madison opinion.



EVENTS

Whiskey Rebellion: An uprising in 1794 in the backcountry of Virginia against a government tax on whiskey production. President Washington responded by leading the army to enforce the tax, establishing the power of the new federal government to enact and collect taxes.

French Revolution: Uprising in France begun in 1789 by the people against the royalty and aristocrats. It was supported in America by the Democratic-Republicans but eventually dissolved into a reign of terror in which many people were accused and beheaded without a fair trial. It eventually ended with the rise of the dictator Napoleon Bonaparte.

Election of 1800: Presidential election between President John Adams and Jefferson. It resulted in the first transition of power from one party to another.

XYZ Affair: Political scandal during the John Adams administration when letters from American diplomats in France were made public detailing an effort by France's foreign minister to demand bribes from the Americans.

Quasi-War with France: Open conflict with France from 1798 to 1800 on the high seas due to American neutrality. France was attempting to stop American merchants from doing business with Britain. No declaration of war was ever made.

First Barbary War: Naval conflict in the Mediterranean Sea between America and the Barbary Pirates in 1801 during Thomas Jefferson's presidency.

Second Barbary War: Naval conflict in the Mediterranean Sea between America and the Barbary Pirates in 1807 during James Madison's presidency.

Embargo of 1807: Embargo on imports from Europe established by President Jefferson in an effort to stop French and British ships from attacking American merchants. The plan backfired as it hurt Americans more than Europeans.

War of 1812: War with Britain. It was America's first declared war. It lasted three years and resulted in a military stalemate, but affirmed American independence and provided renewed sense of national identity.

Hartford Convention: Meeting of Federalists in 1814 in which secession of the New England States was discussed. It led to the downfall of the party as a force in national politics.



GOVERNMENT AGENCIES

First Bank of the United States: Bank created by an act of congress as part of Alexander Hamilton's financial plan. He hoped that it would help stabilize the nation's financial system by issuing a stable currency.



LAWS

Alien and Sedition Acts: Laws passed in 1798 by the Federalist congress and President Adams designed to limit the influence of their political opponents. They severely limited the freedom of speech and were clearly in violation of the First Amendment.



COURT CASES

Marbury v. Madison: 1801 Supreme Court case that resulted from the appointment of the Midnight Justices. The resulting decision by Chief Justice John Marshall established the principle of judicial review.



SPEECHES

Washington's Farewell Address: Letter and speech by President Washington at the end of his tenure summarizing his political philosophy and outlining his recommendations for the nation. Most remembered, he warned against entering into foreign alliances.