



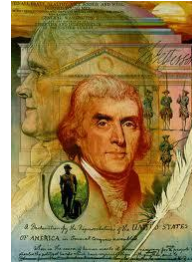
# John Adams Presidency

Election of 1796, X, Y, Z  
Affair, Alien and Sedition  
Acts, and nullification

# Election of 1796

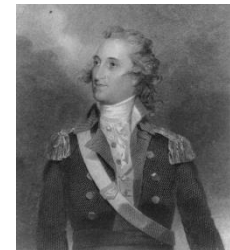
- Democratic-Republicans chose :

- Thomas Jefferson for President
- Aaron Burr for Vice President



- Federalists chose:

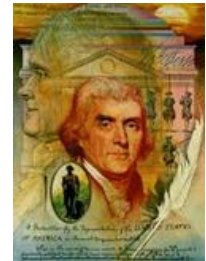
- John Adams for President
- Thomas Pinckney for Vice President

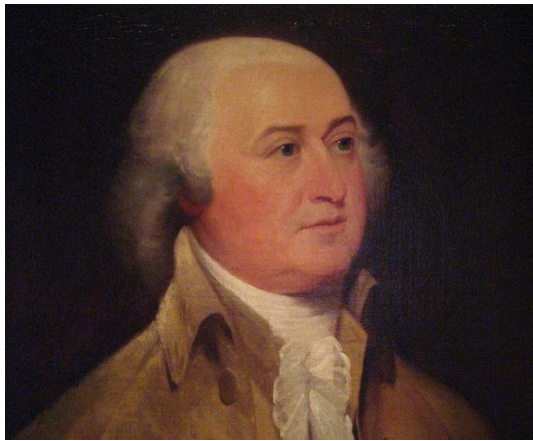


- Each elector must cast 2 ballots. The candidate with the most votes wins President, 2<sup>nd</sup> place is Vice President
- Each party assumed its members would vote for its parties candidates.
  - The Federalists did not vote for Thomas Pinckney.

- The results:

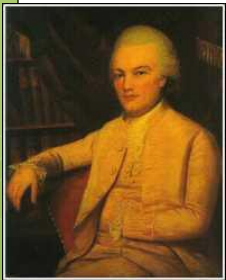
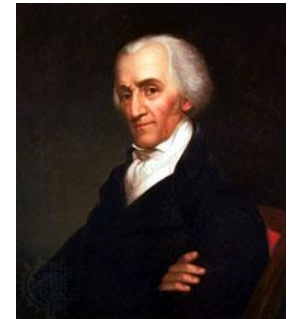
- John Adams(Federalist) for President
- Thomas Jefferson (Democratic-Republican) for Vice President.
- This situation was prime for conflict and tension.





## John Adams, 2<sup>nd</sup> President

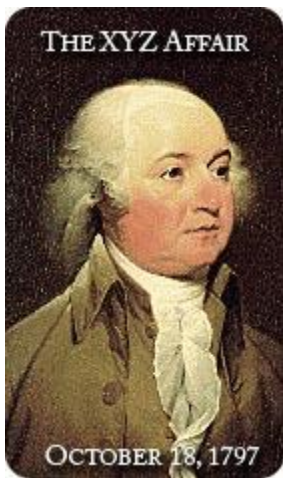
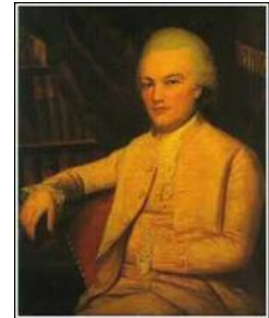
- As soon as he took office Adams faced a crisis with the French who did not like Jay's Treaty.
- The French began capturing US ships in the West Indies.
- Some Americans called for war but Adams hoped to achieve peace.
- Adams sent Charles Pinckney, John Marshall and Elbridge Gerry as ambassadors to negotiate with France.



# X, Y, Z Affair

- Charles de Talleyrand the French Foreign Minister sent 3 spies to demand that America pay a bribe. A \$10 million loan to France and \$250,000 for Talleyrand.

- Outraged Pinckney replied “Not a sixpence!” and the Americans walked out and set sail for America.



- Immediately upon their return to America the Ambassadors reported to Adams who informed Congress of the incident.
- Congress wanted the names of the 3 French spies but Adams refused calling them only x, y, and z.

# X, Y, Z Affair

- The scandal went public in 1798 and Americans were outraged.



- America's national slogan became "Millions for defense but not one cent for tribute!"
- The x, y, z Affair united the nation in their anger with France.
- However, Adams refused to ask for a declaration of war against France.



- But he did strengthen the Navy which led France to believe America was going to declare war.
- This convinced the French to leave America alone and forced Talleyrand to apologize and promise to treat all future American ambassadors with respect.

# X, Y, Z Affair

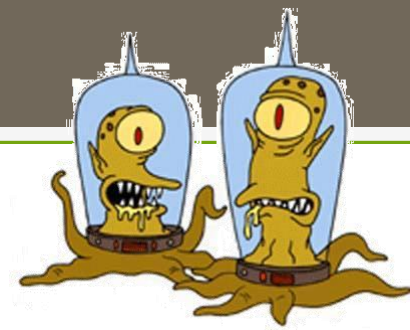


- Many members of the Federalist party were unhappy with the way Adams handled the French.
- Alexander Hamilton was very vocal about his desire for war.
- This disagreement on war split the Federalist party in two. Hamilton supporters became the High Federalists. Adams supporters remained the Federalists.
- Despite his parties objections Adams sent a new set of ambassadors to negotiate with the French.



- Napoleon busy trying to take Europe signed the Convention of 1800. This agreement promised that France would stop attacking U.S. ships.

# The Alien Act



- The Alien Act was passed by the Federalists in 1798.
- It allowed the President to expel any alien (foreign immigrant) who he thought posed a danger to the country.
- It also increased from 7 years to 14 years the wait for an immigrant to apply for citizenship.



- The High federalists argued that the law was to protect America from spies.
- But it was really political. Most French Immigrants joined the Democratic-Republican party when they became citizens. The Alien Act prevented them from voting.



# The Sedition Act

- The Sedition Act was also passed by the Federalists in 1798.

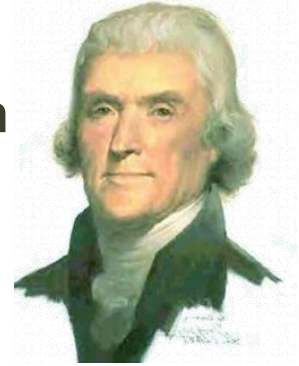


- The Sedition Act made it a crime to speak or write any untrue criticism of the United States, its government or government officials.
- Democratic-Republicans argued the Sedition Act violated the 1<sup>st</sup> Amendment right to free speech.
- Many newspapermen and Congressmen were thrown in jail for speaking out against elected officials.



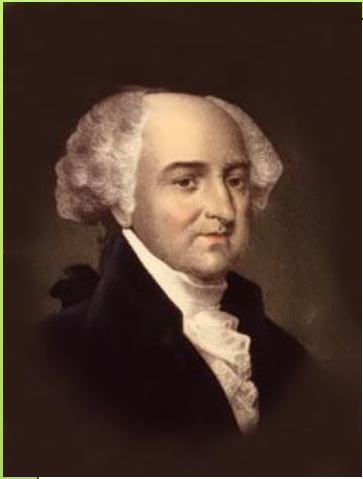
# Nullification

- Thomas Jefferson believed the Alien and Sedition Acts would lead to an end to democracy.
  - He did not believe that the Federalist controlled Supreme Court would declare these acts unconstitutional.
- Jefferson believed that states had the right to nullify, or ignore, federal laws.
- The Kentucky and Virginia Resolutions were passed saying states could nullify laws within their borders.



- They argued that States had an equal right to determine the constitutionality of laws.
- The nullification issue would continue for several years without a solution.

# Packing the Courts



- As one of his last acts as a lame duck President, John Adams packed the courts with Federalist judges (lifetime appointments).
- Adams also appointed John Marshall to serve as Chief Justice of the Supreme Court.
- It was left to James Madison the incoming Secretary of State to see that all the appointment documents were delivered to these judges once Thomas Jefferson was sworn in as the new President.

