

John Adams' Presidency

ELECTION OF 1796

- Candidates:
 - Federalists: John Adams & Thomas Pinckney
 - Democratic-Republicans: Thomas Jefferson, Aaron Burr
- Winner: **John Adams**
- Vice President: **Thomas Jefferson**
 - Strange Occurrence: the President and Vice President are from opposing political parties (eventually will be changed with the 12th Amendment)

XYZ AFFAIR

- Three American diplomats travel to France to meet with French Foreign Minister **Charles Maurice de Talleyrand**, but he never shows up
 - Instead three random men show up and demand:
 - An apology
 - Americans to pay off their debts to the French citizens
 - A \$12 million dollar loan to France
 - \$250,000 bribe to Charles Talleyrand
- Americans refuse to pay the bribe and tell France to “prepare for war”.
 - Adams increases the size of the army and navy
 - Adams is able to avoid war with France though
 - Federalist Party splits

ALIEN AND SEDITION ACTS

- Four laws passed in 1798 by a Federalist (dominated) Congress
 - Purpose: Reduce the power of the Democratic-Republicans
 - 1 - **Naturalization Act**: extended the number of years required to become a citizen from 5 years to 14 years
 - 2 - **Alien Act**: gave the President power to kick out of the country any alien regarded as dangerous to public peace and safety
 - 3 - **Alien Enemies**: made it a crime to attack the government with “false, scandalous, or malicious” statements or writings
 - 4 - **Sedition Act**: made it illegal to print anything “false, scandalous, or malicious” about the federal government

KENTUCKY AND VIRGINIA RESOLUTIONS

- Sedition Act violates the first amendment
- Jefferson involved:
 - **States can nullify a federal law, secede (break away)**
 - Sets a poor precedent for future generations