

# THE PRESIDENCY OF GEORGE WASHINGTON



II.1, II.2, II.3

# 11.1 INTRODUCTION

- ❖ George Washington was reluctant to take power - he came out of retirement to become president
- ❖ Washington's Cabinet: Henry Knox (Sec of War), Alexander Hamilton (Sec. of Treasury), Thomas Jefferson (Sec. of State)
- ❖ Political rivalries developed during the first years of the history of our nation.



## 11.2 LAUNCHING THE NEW GOVERNMENT

- ❖ Washington was elected by the Electoral College unanimously, and John Adams became the Vice President
- ❖ He was inaugurated (began his term of office) in 1789



# THE TITLE DEBATE

- ❖ The first Congress was divided: How much power should the federal gov't have?
- ❖ There was a debate about what the president should be called
- ❖ Washington ended the debate when he said to call him "Mr. President".



# SETTING UP THE EXECUTIVE BRANCH

◆ Congress created the first departments of the **Cabinet**

- **Department of War:** Defend the nation (Secretary of War: Henry Knox)
- **Department of State:** Relations with Foreign Nations (Secretary of State: Thomas Jefferson)
- **Treasury Department:** Oversee nation's finances (Secretary of the Treasury: Alexander Hamilton)
- An Attorney General & a Postmaster General were also appointed



President George Washington

Secretary of War Henry Knox

Secretary of Treasury Alexander Hamilton

Secretary of State Thomas Jefferson

Attorney General Edmund Randolph

**WASHINGTON'S FIRST CABINET**

# 11.3 WASHINGTON AS PRESIDENT

- ❖ Critical problem facing the nation: Money!
- ❖ Congress could tax to raise money, but argued about **what** to tax and **how much** to tax
- ❖ Congress decided to place an excise tax (sales tax) on whiskey and other luxury goods



# THE WHISKEY REBELLION

- ❖ Farmers who made whiskey from the wheat they grew protested the tax, defying the authority of the federal gov't
- ❖ Washington (with Hamilton's support) sent U.S. troops to crush the rebellion, thus preserving the authority to the federal gov't
- ❖ Hamilton and Jefferson disagreed about how this situation was handled; showed a split between the two





# THE FRENCH REVOLUTION

- ❖ 1789: **French Revolution:**  
People of France rebelled against the king and became a republic
- ❖ Jefferson was pleased; he saw this as part of a worldwide movement away from monarchy toward democracy (Jefferson & his followers: called Republicans or Democratic-Republicans)





- ❖ However, the French Revolution turned violent, as angry mobs killed royalty and wealthy people
- ❖ Hamilton was not a supporter of this revolution. He and his followers were the Federalists, and most were wealthy (like the victims of the French Revolution).

# WASHINGTON'S FAREWELL ADDRESS

- ❖ Washington agreed to a second term due to his concern about the divisions between the Republicans & the Federalists
- ❖ At the end of his 2nd term, he decided not to run again





“One Last Time”

# WASHINGTON'S FAREWELL ADDRESS

## ❖ Farewell Address:

- Reminded the American people what united them: beliefs and principles of the D of I
- Warned of threats to the future of our nation: he was against political parties, because he believed such division could tear the nation apart
- Warned against foreign entanglements: didn't feel the U.S. should get involved with problems of other nations

<https://app.discoveryeducation.com/learn/videos/4a905da5-1c4a-42aa-ae0a-01f599c99d86/>

Start at 1:07

# WASHINGTON'S PRECEDENTS

- ❖ **Precedent**: an earlier event that serves as a guide or example to later events
- ❖ Washington had to set a good example for others to follow

<https://youtu.be/44naqOxMsTM>