

# Thomas Jefferson's Presidency - 1801 to 1809

The Second Revolution?

# Aim

- to learn about the Presidency of Thomas Jefferson and,
- to consider his influence on the development of government.
- These notes can be used to support a 'lecture' style lesson or as prompts for student research - see lesson plan.

# Contents

- The election of 1800
- 'We are all republicans, We are federalists' - approach to government
- Style of Presidency
- Approach to the Constitution
- Judiciary
- Domestic Challenges
- Foreign Policy

# Election of 1800

- Background
  - Divided Administration of Adams
  - The impact of the Alien and Sedition Acts
  - Hamilton's attack on Adams + Federalist Disintegration
  - Washington & Adams's style of government
  - Jefferson's undermining of Adams
    - The use of Callender and pamphlets

# Result of Election of 1800

- Mandate
  - Free Speech - an end to the Sedition Act
  - Constitution - to limit Government
  - Foreign Policy

# Assessment

- Assess Jefferson's role in the election
- Was the election a 'Second Revolution'?

# Approach to Government

- Reduction in size of government
- End to internal taxes
- Collegial approach to Cabinet
- Collaboration with leaders in House and Senate

# Style of Presidency

- Importance of changing the face of the Presidency compared to that of Washington and Adams
  - Informal Dress
  - Informal Manners in White House
  - Written State of the Union to avoid imitating Monarch opening Parliament
  - ‘Lightning Rod’ role of Presidency - to receive criticism



# Assessment

- Assess Jefferson's influence on government and the style of the Presidency
- Do you think that his approach to made laid firm foundations for future governments. If so - why?

# Constitution

- Previous approach to interpretation - strict construction
- Pragmatism
  - Louisiana Purchase
  - Deployment of troops in peacetime to enforce the Embargo Act

# Judiciary

- Marbury -v- Madison - Judicial Review + Federalist Judges
- Impeachments of Pickering and Chase
- Reversals of Convictions under Aliens and Sedition Act
  - Problems with Callender
- US -V- Aaron Burr - disclosure of documents

# Assessment

- Is pragmatism a proper way to approach a Constitution?
- Assess Jefferson's relationship with the Judiciary
- What parallels can be drawn between Jefferson and C20th and C21st President's relationship with the Judiciary

# Domestic Challenges - I

- Republican Party - 'splintering'
- John Randolph of Roanoke and opposition over key issues
  - Louisiana Purchase
  - Fletcher -v- Peck
  - West Florida

# Domestic Challenges 2

- The Case of U.S -V- Aaron Burr
  - Threat to US from armed uprising (and consider secession threats elsewhere)
  - Threat to Presidency from required disclosure of documents and possible attendance at trial as a witness

# Domestic Challenges -3

- Legislation to avoid problems abroad creates problems at home;
  - Embargo Act 1808
  - Non-Intercourse Act 1809

# Assessment

- Assess Jefferson's success in handling Domestic Issues
- Were challenges he faced the natural consequence of the establishment of a new republic?
- Was he helped by the weakness of the Federalists?



# Foreign Affairs

- Threats to USA - On Land
  - Threat of War and Invasion - Spain, Britain and France
  - Native Americans
  - Haiti

# Foreign Affairs 2

- Threats to the USA - By Sea
- Jefferson's vision of Freedom of the Seas
  - Threats from the Barbary Corsairs
  - Threats from Britain and France
    - Impressment - the *Leopard* and the *Chesapeake*
    - Interference with Shipping and the Confiscation of Cargoes

# Assessment

- Was Jefferson completely successful in his campaign against the Barbary Corsairs?
- Why did Jefferson not fully support the new government in Haiti?

# Summary of Presidential Achievements - (Lecture Style Lesson)

- task - in groups of three
  - review notes and handouts and
  - Consider and list Jefferson's achievements as President by 1809.