

John Adams

Second President (1797-1801)

While Washington was tall and dignified, Adams was short and pudgy. Washington spoke little and Adams was VERY outspoken (remember when we discussed him during the Revolution?).

Conflict with France

- The French objected to Jay's Treaty because they felt it favored Britain
- **XYZ Affair**
 - Adams sent diplomats to Paris to discuss the rights of neutral nations. The French foreign minister (Talleyrand) did not meet in person with the American's, he sent three "agents" to offer them a deal.
 - Talleyrand wanted \$250,000 for himself and a \$10 million loan for France. The American's refused.
 - Adams did not reveal the names of the French agents, only called them X, Y, and Z
 - Americans were outraged, saying "Millions for defense, but not one cent for tribute!"
 - Adams did not want war but he did choose to build **frigates** to strengthen the navy

Alien and Sedition Acts

- During the conflict with France, Congress pushed several acts through congress known as the Alien and Sedition Acts.
- Alien Act
 - The President can expel any alien, or foreigner, thought to be dangerous to the country
 - Harder for immigrants to become citizens – made them wait 14 years
- Sedition Act
 - Citizens could be fined or jailed if they criticized the government or its officials
 - Republicans felt this act violated citizens first amendment rights

The Rights of States

- Jefferson opposed the Alien and Sedition Acts
- He argued that states had the right to **nullify** any law passed by the federal government
- **Kentucky and Virginia Resolutions**
 - 1798-Kentucky passes a resolution (written by Jefferson) claiming each state has the right to judge for itself whether a law is constitutional
 - 1799-Virginia passes a similar resolution written by James Madison
 - These resolutions raised the issue of states' rights.

Election of 1800

- Republicans (Jefferson) won the popular vote but Jefferson and Burr each received 73 votes in the Electoral College.
- The House of Representatives chose Jefferson as President
- THE FEDERALIST ERA ENDS