

states (or hire someone to do this for them), and seize their run-away slaves, i.e., recover their rightful property. This was the origin of all later “fugitive slave” laws. Again, Morris was vehement in his opposition, but it was voted up by the convention.

## Ratification

The Philadelphia Convention ended with the proviso that the new Constitution would go into effect only after it had been ratified by nine states. Hamilton initiated the fight for ratification with the publication, on October 27, 1787, of the first of what later would become known as the *Federalist Papers*. Hamilton initially intended his political offensive to be a two-man operation run out of New York City. At the outset he asked Gouverneur Morris to join in authoring a series of essays, but he declined due to prior obligations to Robert Morris in Philadelphia. Hamilton then turned to John Jay, but after Letter Nine, Jay was forced to withdraw because of bad health. Hamilton then chose William Duer, another New Yorker, as his collaborator, but ended up rejecting Duer’s submissions as inadequate. It was only then that Hamilton turned to Madison, his fourth choice, to aid in writing the series.

Over the course of 1788, there were several key battleground states in which ratification was in doubt, including New York, Massachusetts and Virginia. In Massachusetts it was Rufus King and Henry Knox who played the key roles in winning over the leery John Hancock and Samuel Adams to ratification, but the fight in New York was the most intense. For well over a month, during the summer of 1788, a ratifying convention was held at Poughkeepsie, New York, and until the final days, ratification was uncertain. The majority of the delegates, under the direction of Gov. George Clinton,<sup>6</sup> were opposed to ratification, but the delegation from Manhattan, which included Alexander Hamilton, John Jay, Robert Livingston, and Isaac Roosevelt, battled ferociously until ratification was secured in late July.<sup>7</sup>

At the end of the summer, the Continental Congress declared the Constitution to be lawfully ratified, and named New York City as the temporary seat of the government.

6. George Clinton would go on to serve as Vice-President of the United States under both Thomas Jefferson and James Madison.

7. For more on the New York ratifying convention, see “The Federal Ship Hamilton,” at [www.schillerinstitute.org](http://www.schillerinstitute.org)

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## Part III

# The New Administration

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It was not inevitable that Washington would head the new government. Following his service in the French and Indian War and the American Revolution, Washington had informed many of his associates of his desire to retire from politics. Hamilton and others knew that a Washington Presidency was indispensable to what had to be done next. Neither Hamilton nor any of his close associates were happy with the final Constitution, but as Morris was later to describe the finished document, “it was the best that could be accomplished . . . and infinitely better than the existing Articles of Confederation.” The task now was to bring the words on the page to life, and to utilize all of the powers granted by the Constitution to secure the permanent continuance of a sovereign republic. To accomplish that, Washington was urgently needed.

Hamilton, Jay, Morris, and Henry Knox all communicated directly with Washington, expressing their belief that the historic mission could not be completed without his leadership. Morris wrote, “Should the idea prevail that you would not accept the Presidency, it would prove fatal to ratification in many Parts . . . your cool steady Temper is *indisputably necessary* to give a firm and manly Tone to the new Government . . . you therefore must, I say *must* mount the Seat. The Exercise of Authority depends on personal character, and you are the *indispensable* man.” Three weeks after authoring that letter Morris traveled to Mount Vernon and spent three days in private discussion with Washington.

Washington was duly elected, and on April 30, 1789, in Manhattan, he was sworn in as the first President of the United States, Robert Livingston, the Chancellor of New York, delivering the Oath of Office.

Washington was the man in charge, and his word was final, at least to his friends and allies, but, from the beginning, it was Hamilton to whom Washington turned for policy leadership. Washington was not a “figure-head,” but he recognized in Hamilton that genius necessary for the establishment of the new Nation, and Hamilton’s role in the government became so pronounced, so quickly, that Jefferson and his allies began to denounce New York City, the Capital of the Nation, as *Hamiltonopolis*.

The Washington Administration was an experiment as to whether a self-governing Republic—a govern-



*Washington's Cabinet. From Washington's left: Trusted New Yorkers Henry Knox and Alexander Hamilton v. Virginians Thomas Jefferson and Edmund Randolph.*

ment of, by and for the people—could be created and sustained. Hamilton was the second in command and the recognized leader in matters of policy. John Jay became not only the first Chief Justice of the United States, but he was also the individual whom Washington repeatedly chose for key tasks of great importance, such as the Jay Treaty of 1795. Gouverneur Morris, Hamilton's closest friend, spent the entirety of Washington's eight years as President in Europe, to which he had been deployed in the role of Washington's private agent, his "eyes and ears,"—and during the entirety of this period, it was Morris, rather than the individual U.S. Ambassadors to France, Holland, Britain and Spain, who became Washington's most trusted advisor in matters of foreign policy.<sup>8</sup> There were others as well, who played important roles, including Hamilton's protégé Rufus King and Henry Knox (the first Secretary of War), both of whom moved permanently from Massachusetts to New York; Philip Schuyler (Hamilton's father-in-law), and Steven Van Rensselaer. All New Yorkers. This was the leadership of the Washington Administration in 1789.

8. Morris's intense loyalty and personal friendship with Washington was legendary. In the 1790s, Thomas Paine denounced Gouverneur Morris as "Washington's irremovable representative, both in France and America." In 1799, when Washington died, Martha Washington personally requested that Gouverneur Morris deliver his funeral Oration in New York City.

In 1789 Washington wanted the permanent U.S. Capital to be located in Albany, New York, while Gouverneur Morris lobbied for Newburgh, a city on the Hudson River just north of West Point. Hamilton was adamant that the capital should remain in Manhattan, and it was from Manhattan that the battle to create and consolidate the United States of America as a sovereign nation was directed.

Thomas Jefferson, confronted with this phalanx of New York hegemony within the Washington Administration, and after failing to stop the approval of Hamilton's National Bank in 1791, quit the administration so as to attack it from the outside. The idea that "Jeffersonianism" arose out of a later corruption of the Federalist Party under John Adams, or in opposition to the rise of the Boston Connecticut Essex Junto types, is simply a lie. By as early as 1790, at precisely the time that Hamilton was attempting to create the National Bank and the Society for Useful Manufactures, the Virginia attack on the Administration was at full throttle, and it would reach a crescendo with the signing of the Jay Treaty of 1795.

### **Hamilton's Principle<sup>9</sup>**

In his series of reports and actions between 1789 and 1793 Hamilton did not set forth a "program" nor a "formula" for economic policy. The intent, the *Principle*, underlying Hamilton's initiatives is grounded in the goal of an ever-increasing National productivity, rooted in scientific and technological advancement. For Hamilton, this was the axiomatic principle at the heart of the Republic, without which there could be no republic, and thus the full power of the sovereign National Government, led by the Presidency, must be brought to bear to secure that directionality.

Far too often, Hamilton's financial initiatives are viewed as just that, financial or banking initiatives, and, after Hamilton left office, the functioning of both the First and Second National Banks was frequently relegated to that lower-level status, of a mere financial or monetary institution. To understand what Hamilton was doing, one has to look at the relationship between the National Bank, the Society for Establishing Useful Man-

9. See "The American Principle: Return to the Actual U.S. Constitution," by Lyndon H. LaRouche, [EIR](#), May 9, 2014.

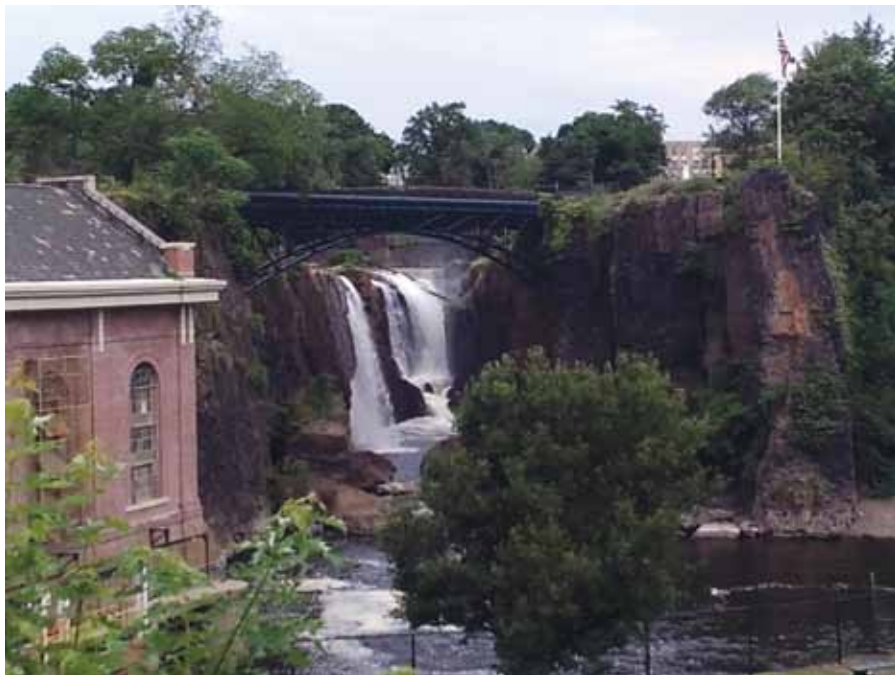
ufactures (SUM), and his *Report on Manufactures*, not as separate initiatives, but one unified thrust.<sup>10</sup>

Hamilton was determined to use the full power of the National Government to drive forward industrial and scientific expansion, and toward that end he battled intensively for a national policy of “bounties” to directly finance industrial enterprises. As Hamilton asked in the *Report on Manufactures*, “In what can it [the national debt] be so useful, as in prompting and improving the efforts of industry?”—and Hamilton proposed that the National Government use two percent of the national debt to finance the creation of a “national manufactory.”<sup>11</sup>

Hamilton’s *Report on Manufactures*, which was submitted to Congress on December 5, 1791, unveiled the formation of the Society for Establishing Useful Manufactures with the words, “It may be announced, that a society is forming with a capital which is expected to be extended to at least a million dollars, on behalf of which measures are already in train for prosecuting on a large scale, the making and printing of cotton goods.”

The Paterson, New Jersey works of the SUM were intended as a “pilot project.” The 1791 Report to Congress defined an ongoing policy of national manufacturing development through the use of bounties, intimately interwoven with the credit-generating power of the National Bank. In that Report, Hamilton argued that the authorization to undertake such a policy of national development rested entirely in the powers granted to the National Government under the General Welfare provisions of the Constitution.

In January 1792, James Madison, in the House, and Jefferson, inside the Cabinet, declared war. Madison wrote to a colleague, “What do you think of the commentary on the terms general welfare. . . this broaches a



*Passaic Falls, New Jersey, site of the Society for Establishing Useful Manufactures.*

new constitutional doctrine of vast consequence and demanding the serious attention of the public, I consider it myself as subverting the fundamental and characteristic principle of the Government, as contrary to the true & fair, as well as the received construction, and as bidding defiance to the sense in which the Constitution is known to have been proposed, advocated and adopted. If Congress can do whatever in their discretion can be done by money, and will promote the general welfare, the Government is no longer a limited one possessing enumerated powers, but an indefinite one subject to particular exceptions.”

In February 1792, Jefferson circulated a memo, “Notes on the Constitutionality of Bounties to Encourage Manufacturing,” wherein he states that import duties were the only legal and allowable means of promoting manufactures, and that direct government support for manufacturing has not been delegated by the Constitution to the General Government, but remains with the state governments.

In late February, during a meeting with Washington, held at Jefferson’s request, Jefferson attacked the *Report on Manufactures*, which he charged meant to establish the doctrine that the power given by the Constitution to collect taxes to provide for the general welfare of the United States, permitted Congress to take every thing under their management which they should

10. The only thing comparable over the next 100 years was the way in which Lincoln utilized his Greenback policy, in conjunction with the National Banking Acts, as a driver for transforming the nation.

11. Also, at this time the Hamilton-created Bank of New York was used to help finance these nation-building policies, Rufus King was a director of the bank, and Isaac Roosevelt was its president.

deem for the public welfare. According to Jefferson's own notes on the meeting, Washington's response was frigid, and the meeting ended abruptly.

Nevertheless, the Report was never presented before Congress for debate or a vote. One year earlier, the National Bank had been approved by the Senate by only one vote, with Philip Schuyler and Rufus King leading the fight for it, and James Monroe leading the opposition.

### Virginia Declares War

The Slave Power assault on Hamilton began from the day that Washington took office. Just as Hamilton, Jay, and Morris were determined to complete the work of the Constitutional Convention, to create "*a More Perfect Union*," the Virginia complex was insanely intent on destroying Hamilton, breaking the grip of the New Yorkers on the new government, seizing power for themselves and spreading both slavery and the Slave Power across the new nation.

The attack on Hamilton began immediately. It was not confined to a policy fight, but included efforts to destroy him politically, financially, and personally. An indication of their intent was the Jefferson/Madison blackmailing of Hamilton to agree to moving the national capital into the very heart of the Slavocracy,<sup>12</sup> in exchange for their cooperation in the national assumption of state debts, an action vital for the establishment

12. At that time Virginia had, by far, the largest number of slaves and Maryland was second in number of slaves.

of a sovereign government. The battle erupted publicly with Jefferson's 1791 declaration of war against the proposed National Bank. Then came the all-out the attempt to destroy Hamilton personally through the Reynolds Affair,<sup>13</sup> in which James Monroe played a particularly despicable role.

Jefferson, Madison, and Monroe were on the attack from Day One, at first within the Administration and Congress, but by no later than early 1791, they began organizing a national party. The method chosen was to create Jacobin Clubs, which on the surface were associations sympathetic with the French Revolution,<sup>14</sup> but in reality were tentacles of the Virginia slavocracy reaching into the North. These political clubs became

13. For the Reynolds story, see *Hamilton's Singular Genius vs. Wall Street's Rage*, by David Shavin, available at [http://schillerinstitute.org/educ/hist/eiw\\_this\\_week/2015/0111/a.html](http://schillerinstitute.org/educ/hist/eiw_this_week/2015/0111/a.html)

14. This is not the place to go into a lengthy discussion of the French Revolution. I recommend the *Diaries of Gouverneur Morris*, the only foreign diplomat to reside in Paris through the entirety of that revolution, from prior to the Tennis Court Oath to after the downfall of Robespierre. Morris was of the view that the French Revolution could not possibly succeed due to the non-existence of a republican citizenry in France, and he saw Lafayette, whom he had known since Valley Forge, as a hopelessly deluded romantic, out of his depth, and listening to the wrong people, namely Jefferson and Tom Paine. From the beginning, with the creation of the National Assembly, Morris predicted that the Revolution would quickly pass over into chaos and massive bloodshed, followed by a dictatorship. Whether one agrees or disagrees with all of Morris's views, his prognostications proved precisely accurate. It should be noted that despite their sharp disagreements, it was Morris who saved Lafayette's wife, Adrienne, from the guillotine.

## N.Y. Sen. Robert Kennedy In Mississippi

Biographer Evan Thomas wrote of a trip Robert Kennedy took to rural Mississippi in 1967, to hold hearings on housing. He went out into the fields, where he was deeply moved by the scenes of abject squalor and poverty. Later, when he flew home to New York accompanied by his aides, one of them said, "He grabbed me. He said, 'You don't know what I saw! I have done nothing in my life! Everything I have done is worthless!'"

That very evening, he called together his nine

children, ages two to fifteen, and demanded that they dedicate their lives to better the world. He told them that he had gone into one windowless shack, where "he sat down on a dirty floor, and held a child who was covered with open sores. He rubbed the child's stomach, which was distended by starvation. He caressed and murmured and tickled, but got no response. The child was in a daze.

"In Mississippi," he said, "a whole family lives in a shack the size of this room. The children are covered with sores, and their tummies stick out because they have no food. Do you know how lucky you are? Do you know how lucky you are? Do something for your country!"

—Donald Phau

the vehicle through which the entire New York leadership of the Washington Administration was accused of being “aristocrats,” pro-British, and conspiring to establish a monarchy.<sup>15</sup>

To my knowledge, the only prominent Federalist Party leader who ever publicly advocated a monarchy was John Adams. Hamilton, Morris, and Jay were all impassioned in their commitment to republican government. Additionally, actions speak louder than words, and the policy initiatives which Hamilton battled for—and which Jefferson and Madison opposed—would have led to a dramatic increase in scientific and industrial progress, and the concurrent uplifting of the cognitive skills and productivity of the American people,—the true basis for a republic. Most incredibly, the charges of “monarchist” and “aristocrat” which were hurled against Hamilton, all originated among Southern slave-owners, who themselves parodied the lifestyle of the landed English gentry, and amused themselves by abusing their slaves, or in Jefferson’s case breeding with them.

The Virginians began picking off and recruiting weaker members from among Washington’s supporters. John Jay’s intimate friend Robert Livingston went over to Jefferson in 1792, largely because Hamilton had blocked two of his personal initiatives in New York, the first being Livingston’s incompetent attempt to create a Land Bank, and the second when Hamilton secured a New York Senate seat, which Livingston coveted, for Philip Schuyler. Tench Coxe is another example, a man who throughout his career—as his private letters attest—was primarily driven by personal ambition. Supposedly Hamilton’s trusted assistant, by 1791 Coxe was de-facto Jefferson’s spy within the U.S. Treasury, reporting regularly to Jefferson and Madison on everything Hamilton was saying and doing.

This brings up a touchy subject. The story goes that Philadelphia became the birthplace for a new type of republicanism, Hamiltonian in policy but Jeffersonian in spirit. But there are also uncomfortable truths. Philadelphia was the northern stronghold of the Jeffersonian Jacobin Clubs, which later morphed into the official electoral machine of the Jeffersonian Party. From 1791

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15. This tactic would be used by the Slave Power against its enemies over and over again for the next 30 years right through the 1828 campaign of Andrew Jackson against John Quincy Adams. Abraham Lincoln was attacked in almost the same exact language by Jefferson Davis and his cohorts in 1861.

to 1794, thousands of Philadelphians marched around waving the Tri-Color flag, singing the Marseillaise, donning the Phrygian cap of the sans culotte and addressing each other as Citizen,—all of them pawns of the Virginia Slave Power. Remember, this was during Washington’s **FIRST** term as President, *when Hamilton was fighting for the National Bank and the Society for Establishing Useful Manufactures*, and these Jefferson “republican” clubs were deployed to stop Hamilton dead in his tracks. Painfully, it must also be stated that it was not just Tench Coxe. Rather, Mathew Carey, Alexander Dallas, and other later boosters of the Monroe Presidency *all went over to Jefferson at this time,—not later, but in the very heat of the battle between Hamilton and Jefferson*. In a letter dated September 13, 1792, Elisha Boudinot (one of the directors of the SUM), wrote to Hamilton noting that a petition campaign was beginning against the SUM, and that in Philadelphia, “a strong party is forming in that city against the Secretary of the Treasury.”

Then, in 1792 Washington appointed Gouverneur Morris as Ambassador to France, and the Slave Power went wild. The slave-owner James Monroe denounced Morris as an avowed monarchist, unfit to represent the United States. Various Jeffersonian allies attacked Morris’s “immoral” character,<sup>16</sup> in which they were joined by John Adams.<sup>17</sup> After a lengthy, intense fight, the Senate, despite Monroe’s efforts, confirmed the Morris’s appointment by a narrow majority.

### The Jay Treaty

In 1794, as relations were worsening with Great Britain, Washington sent John Jay as a special emissary to London for the purpose of negotiating a new treaty, intended to resolve many of the conflicts left over from the earlier 1783 Treaty of Paris. (Three years earlier, Washington had deployed Morris from Paris to London to “feel out” the British leaders on the possibility of a new treaty.) The result was what today is known as the Jay Treaty of 1795, and it was the mas-

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16. A bachelor until late in life, Morris had a reputation throughout his life as a “ladies’ man,” which the Jeffersonians as well as some prudish New England Federalists used against him, in much the same way that Benjamin Franklin had been condemned for his attraction to the fair sex.

17. John Adams burned with envy of Washington, hated Hamilton and despised Morris. However, no one seemed to like him very much, either, except his wife, his son, and Thomas Jefferson in his old age.



sive nationwide Slave Power attack on this Treaty which gave birth to the organized Jeffersonian Party.

As in the appointment of Gouverneur Morris to France, the appointment of Jay as a special Ambassador to Britain was strongly opposed in the Senate by James Monroe, and only approved by an eighteen-to-eight vote.

Earlier, after his paramount role in securing ratification of the Constitution by New York State, Jay had been named Chief Justice of the Supreme Court by Washington. In 1792 he ran for Governor of New York against Jefferson ally George Clinton, only to be robbed of the election, when the Clinton-controlled legislature nullified the votes of two entire counties that would have given Jay victory. During that campaign, the Clinton forces circulated articles and broadsheets charging that if Jay were elected he would free all of New York's slaves.

Jay spent one year in London, and in 1795 the treaty which he had successfully negotiated was submitted to the U.S. Congress. For more than 200 years that treaty has been vilified by pro-Jefferson historians as pro-British. I will not attempt a "defense" of that treaty here, for there is nothing to defend. Between 1794 and 1814 three treaties were signed with the British: the Jay Treaty, the Monroe-Pinckney Treaty of 1806 (under Jefferson), and the Treaty of Ghent (under Madison), negotiated by Henry Clay and John Quincy Adams, which ended the War of 1812. Unlike the Jay Treaty, the later Monroe-Pinckney treaty was strictly a commercial treaty, and its provisions—negotiated by an individual who had declared the Jay Treaty treasonous—are almost a carbon copy of the Jay Treaty,—a little stronger on a few points, a little weaker on others, but practically identical. The later Treaty of Ghent was a fiasco, with the United States agreeing to the pre-war *status quo*, and surrendering every single one of its pre-war aims. The Jay Treaty, on the other hand, not only secured peace and U.S. neutrality; it also achieved significant commercial concessions from the British, and was successful in resolving a number of critical



John Jay, by Gilbert Stuart

issues left over from 1783, including an agreement by the British to surrender all of the forts they continued to occupy on U.S. soil in the Great Lakes region, which, in fact, they did by 1796.

Hamilton strongly backed the Treaty and campaigned for it; Morris believed that Jay could have pressed the British much harder on trade concessions, but that, nevertheless, the Treaty represented a solid success. Once Congress ratified the Treaty, Washington signed it immediately.

The Slave Power declared war. The "Pennsylvania Democratic Society" was organized in Philadelphia, and an invitation

sent out for the formation of affiliated societies throughout the Union. In Savannah, New York, Charleston, and many other locations, groups were organized, all professing the same object, to rescue the people from the oppression of their monarchical pro-British rulers<sup>18</sup>

The immediate goal of these Jeffersonian-directed societies was to overturn Washington's 1793 Proclamation of Neutrality and to bring the United States into the European war, allied with the mass-murderer Robespierre (and afterwards with the Directory). The New York society proclaimed:

We take pleasure in avowing that we are lovers of the French nation; that we esteem their cause as our own. We most firmly believe that he who is an enemy to the French revolution cannot be a firm republican; and, therefore . . . ought not to be intrusted with the guidance of any part of the machine of government.

The Pennsylvania society resolved that the President had no right to issue the proclamation of neutrality, and asked

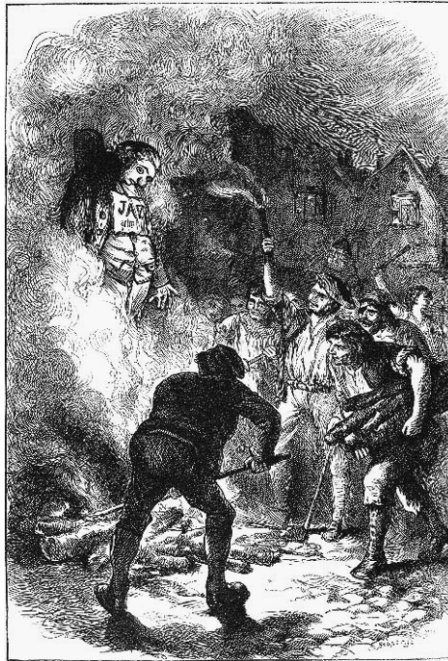
18. It was in the fight around the Jay Treaty that the Jeffersonians began to attack Washington by name.

“Is our President, like the grand sultan of Constantinople, shut up in his apartment, and unacquainted with all talents or capacities but those of the *seraskier* or *mufiti* that happens to be about him?”

Hamilton took the point in rallying the population behind the treaty, but, at an open air mass meeting in Manhattan, Jeffersonian agents attacked the speaker’s platform, and Hamilton was struck in the face with a large stone, barely escaping serious injury or death. In Philadelphia, on the 4th of July, a mob assembled and paraded in the streets with an effigy of John Jay bearing a pair of scales, one labeled “American Liberty and Independence,” and the other, “British Gold,” while from the mouth of Jay proceeded the words, “Come up to my price, and I will sell you my Country.” The effigy was afterward publicly burned in the center of the city.<sup>19</sup> A riot occurred in front of Washington’s residence in Philadelphia,<sup>20</sup> with death threats hurled against the President.

Dozens of articles were published attacking Jay, Washington, and the Treaty. In New York, Hamilton’s enemy and Jay’s former friend Robert Livingston took the lead. He authored 16 essays under the name of Cato, excoriating the treaty as a surrender to Britain. In Philadelphia, Alexander Dallas wrote “Features of Mr. Jay’s Treaty,” which was published by Mathew Carey, wherein he joined the ranks of those calling for a military alliance with our “sister republic” France. Several of the other Philadelphia publishers, including Bache and Freneau, were far more rabid in their attacks on Jay, Hamilton, and Washington.

But the real intent spewed forth from the heart of the Slavocracy. A Jefferson-allied newspaper in Virginia wrote:



Print Collector/HIP/The Image Works

*Jacobin mobs in action. “When he returned home after signing the unpopular Jay’s Treaty in 1794, Jay ruefully joked that he could travel across the country by the light of burning effigies of himself.”*

Notice is hereby given, that in case the treaty entered into by that d—ned arch-traitor John Jay with the British tyrant, should be ratified, a petition will be presented to the next General Assembly of Virginia at their next session, praying that the said State may secede from the Union, and be under the government of one hundred thousand free and independent Virginians.” And in South Carolina, the Democratic-Republican Society issued a manifesto, declaring, “Resolved, That we pledge ourselves to our brethren of the republican societies throughout the Union, as far as the ability and individual influence of a numerous society can be made to extend, that we will promote every constitutional mode to bring John Jay to trial and to justice. He shall not escape, if guilty, that punishment which will at once wipe off the temporary stain laid upon us, and be a warning to Traitors hereafter how they sport with the interests and feelings of their fellow-citizens. He was instructed, or he was not: if he was, we will drop the curtain; if not, and he acted of and from himself, we shall lament the want of a Guillotine.

South Carolina’s Charles Pinckney, who had publicly battled Gouverneur Morris over slavery at the Constitutional Convention and authored the “fugitive slave” clauses in the Constitution, joined in the public attacks on the Treaty as treasonous.<sup>21</sup>

Jefferson vilified the Treaty, and in the Congress James Monroe fought almost insanely for its rejection.

Hamilton fought back. In New York City, under the name of Camillus, Hamilton published, from July 1795 to January 1796, 38 essays simply titled “The Defense,” the first one appearing only four days after the attack

19. It was during this period that Hamilton publicly referred to the “political putrification” of Pennsylvania.

20. The Capital had been moved, temporarily, from New York to Philadelphia in 1790.

21. Pinckney would go on to support the administrations of Jefferson, Madison and Monroe, and in 1820 provide strong backing in the Congress for Henry Clay’s pro-slavery Missouri Compromise.

that was intended to injure or kill him. These essays had such an impact that Jefferson wrote to Madison, urging him to respond: “Hamilton is really a *colossus* to the anti-republican party. Without numbers he is a host within himself. . . In truth, when he comes forward, there is nobody but yourself who can meet him.” Madison sent a letter to Jefferson declining the challenge to confront Hamilton head-on.

Again, even if it is repetitious, it must be re-stated—so that there is no possibility of denying the consequences—that the political war launched by the Virginia Slavocracy was aimed, not at the Federalist Party, but at Hamilton, Jay, Morris, and the New York leadership. It did not begin later, after the “corruption” of the Federalist Party, but from the moment Washington was sworn in as President. And the intent was to destroy Hamilton, ruin his policy initiatives, drive the New Yorkers out of the Administration, and leave Washington isolated in the fight against the interests of the Slave Power.

As for John Jay, he would later be elected Governor of New York State twice, both times with Steven Van Rensselaer as his Lieutenant Governor, and during his second term, he would successfully steer through the legislature and sign into law a bill leading to the abolition of slavery in New York.

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## Part IV

# The Slave Power

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*A word of warning—or advice—is required here. It is not possible to grasp the dynamic of the battle between the young nation’s New York leadership and the Virginia-centered Slave Power, without an honest, perhaps wrenching, re-evaluation of certain accepted truths concerning the patriotic tradition in American history. That said, the rest speaks for itself.*



Library of Congress

*Thomas Jefferson’s slave Lucy, sold at auction after his death.*

It is the case that at the time of the Constitutional Convention, many leading Americans expected slavery to be abolished within a relatively short period of time. Unlike in 1860, when Southern leaders would regularly invoke God to defend the morality of slavery, in 1788 even many in the South admitted to the horror of the institution, and it was apparent to the majority of Americans that the continuation of slavery and the principles of the Declaration of Independence were incompatible. Prior to 1770, slavery was legal in all 13 colonies; but by 1790 all of the states north of Maryland had either emancipated their slaves or taken steps in that direction, and this momentum was

spreading to the South. During the Revolutionary War, Hamilton’s close friend John Laurens had introduced a bill into the South Carolina legislature for statewide emancipation (for which he received a congratulatory letter from George Washington), and in the 1780s Delaware came within a hair’s-breadth of abolishing slavery.

At the same time, between 1776 and 1789 a substantial number of Southern slave-owners freed their slaves, either outright or in their wills. George Washington was one of these.<sup>22</sup> The eccentric John Randolph of Virginia was another. John Dickinson, once Delaware’s largest slaveholder, sided openly with Gouverneur Morris against slavery at the Philadelphia Convention and freed all of his slaves by 1787. The most compelling case is that of Edward Coles, one of the largest slave-owners in Virginia, a neighbor of Jefferson, and an individual of equal social rank to that future President. Coles gathered up all of his slaves, transported them to the Northwest Territory, loaded them all out on rafts and barges in the middle of the

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22. All of the New York leadership were fiercely opposed to the Slave Power. Morris had authored the first proposal for abolition of slavery in New York State in 1778, and in 1785 Hamilton, Jay, Morris, and Van Rensselaer were all founding members of the New York Manumission Society, with Jay as the first president.